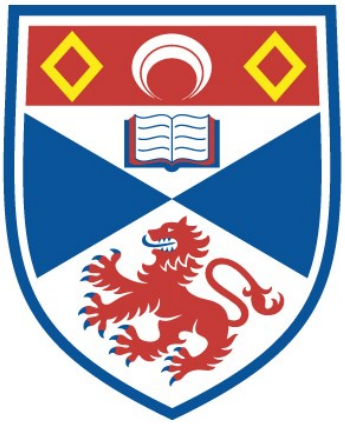
SOME ASPECTS OF THE EVOLUTIONARY ORIGIN OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Richard Marlin Cromie

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



1974

"SOME ASPECTS OF THE EVOLUTIONARY ORIGIN
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CHRISTIAN ETHICS"

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BEING A THESIS PRESENTED BY
RICHARD MARLIN CROMIE, B.A., B.D., M. DIV.

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS
IN APPLICATION FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the following thesis is based on the results of research carried out by me, that the thesis is my own composition, and that it has not previously been presented for a Higher Degree.

Richard Marlin Cromie

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania March, 1974

CERTIFICATION

I certify that Richard Marlin Cromie has spent ten terms at Research Work in St. Mary's College, the University of St. Andrews, that he has fulfilled the conditions of Ordinance (St. Andrews) No. 16 and Resolution of the University Court, 1967, No. 1, and that he is qualified to submit the accompanying thesis in application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Professor James A. Whyte

STATEMENT OF TRAINING

Upon completion of a course of four years' study at the University of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) in science and liberal arts, I was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1957. I then matriculated at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary later in 1957, and graduated in 1961 with the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, cum laude. During the academic year 1958 to 1959, I was in residence in St. Mary's College of the University of St. Andrews as a Rotary Foundation Fellowship student. I also did further graduate study in the Department of History at the University of Pittsburgh in the 1961-62 school year.

I returned to St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews, and matriculated as a Research Student at the beginning of the spring term in 1966. I remained in residence at St. Mary's until the autumn of 1968 when I returned to Pittsburgh. On my return I resumed pastoral work as minister of the Parkwood Presbyterian Church, and more recently as Senior Pastor at Southminster Presbyterian Church in Mount Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

In the time between my Bachelor of Divinity study at Pittsburgh Seminary and the return to St. Mary's

College in 1966, I was University Pastor at Carnegie-Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh. I was also an assistant minister in a parish church, during which time I lectured for two years in Christian Ethics at a college preparatory school. I received the Master of Divinity degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1970.

The vast majority of the thesis research was completed prior to my return to Pittsburgh near the beginning of 1969. The writing, organization and revision have been done while I have been engaged in two active parish ministries. The thesis has been completed at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary during vacation periods and during two leaves of absence from my parish duties.

In Memoriam

Miss Mabel L. Gillespie
1876 to 1967

Whose only extravagance was her generosity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

The Christian moralist does not live in a vacuum. He develops his ethical thought in the atmosphere of the world around him, currently a world of rapid change, volatile events, expanding knowledge, and interrelated discoveries. The relationship of his theological work to those discoveries and events affect his existence and the development of his ethics. This thesis explores one aspect of that relationship and examines some of the ways in which the recent studies in evolutionary science affect the development of Christian ethics in the last few decades of the twentieth century. James Sellers has advised in a recent book on Theological Ethics:

> The ethicist will take steps to open his investigations to every helpful means of studying his culture and society. He will necessarily be an amateur in most realms of analysis . . . (But) he must not be reluctant to make use of the professional work of the natural and social scientists and humanists, so far as he is able, for filling out and supplementing his own methods of getting at the facts. He will also select one or more non-theological disciplines . . . in which he works at becoming a knowledgeable amateur.[1]

This thesis was begun in advance of Sellers' advice, but it is this writer's attempt to become a "knowledgeable amateur" in a non-theological discipline, to the end that it will assist

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[1] James Sellers, Theological Ethics (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), p. 82.

in the definition of and the solution to some current ethical problems facing the Christian moralist.

As it stands now, I have ended with a thesis that I did not intend to write. At the start I was interested in the subject of how ethical decisions are made in the context of non-rational settings, where, by the time the agent begins to reflect on ethical situations, he more or less already has his ethical ideals as part of the reflection. That intended thesis involved psychological, sociological, and biological considerations.

At first I proposed a thesis entitled, "The Role of the Unconscious in Ethical Decisions, and its Implications for the Study of Christian Ethics." Freud figured prominently in that study, for his work has great importance to the moralist. His studies on the formation of ethical ideals in the relationship of parent-to-child, and the whole topic of the origin of the super-ego, is a critical step in understanding the inception of moral ideas and actions.[2]

Others have followed Freud in this subject, and some of their work is also essential to an understanding of ethical judgments.[3] Jung would have been included, partly because of his frequently discussed idea of the collective unconscious.

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[2]See esp. Philip Rieff: Freud: The Mind of a Moralist (London: Methuen University Paperbacks, 1965)

[3]Although, as Dr. Seward Hiltner wrote to me in a personal letter, there is not a single good and comprehensive book which relates the subject matter to Christian ethics.

Unsuitable though I think that concept is to me, it seems to hint at a kind of a priori as well as the same type of "molecular memory"[4] which is akin to the influence which genetically-conditioned behaviour has on the formation of ethical ideals and ethical acts in man.

Secondly we looked to the social-anthropological studies of ethical behaviour and the different cultural influence on the formation of the "good". Sociologists and social anthropologists have shown that cultural, or environmental, pre-conditioning of ethical decisions is a most important aspect in the non-rational origin and development of our ethical behaviour. As Dr. Ralph Linton once wrote:

> The culture as a whole provides the members of any society with an indispensable guide in all the affairs of life . . . The fact that most members of the society will react to a given situation in a given way makes it possible for anyone to predict their behaviour with a high degree of probability, even though never with absolute certainty.[5]

There are several which deal with various aspects of the topic, and some of the following are especially helpful to the student: J. A. Hadfield, Psychology and Morals: Analysis of Character (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1923; Revised edition in University Paperbacks, 1964); Ian D. Suttie, The Origins of Love and Hate (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Peregrine Books, 1963; First Published in 1935); Harry L. Hollingworth, Psychology and Ethics (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1949); R. E. Money-Kyrle, Psychoanalysis and Politics: A Contribution to the Psychology of Politics and Morals (London: Gerald Duckworth & Company, Ltd. 1951); Dr. Edmund Bergler, The Superego: Unconscious Conscience (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1952), etc.

[4]John Bleibtreu, The Parable of the Beast (London: Victor Gollanz Ltd., 1968), Chapter III, pp. 82 ff.

[5]Ralph Linton, The Cultural Background of Personality (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, Ltd., 1947), p. 13.

In ethical matters, we do tend to follow the ethical and moral dictates of those around us; we do tend to shape our ideas of the "good," with at least "a high degree of probability" on the basis of what we are taught. This is made clear by different students of ethical-cultural studies.[6] And Professor Ashley Montagu wrote in a way directly related to many of the concerns of this thesis:

> It is not surprising that Freud was unable to avoid structuring what he perceived of the dynamics of the human mind in terms of the dynamics of the human society with which he was familiar; precisely as the Darwinians were unable to avoid the competitive struggle for existence which prevailed in the nineteenth century England. There is nothing new in the discovery that we tend to see the world according to the Kingdom that is within us, and the Kingdom that is within us is for the most part likely to be the one in which we have been socialized.[7]

Along with the psychological and sociological aspects of the "non-rational" in ethical judgments, there is our special interest here - the biological. It is this sub-division of the ethical experience to which we have delimited our thesis topic, and which forms the primary concern of this thesis. One of the reasons for this choice was the general problem facing any thesis writer, especially one covering a broad topic - the necessity of

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[6] See over.

[7] Ashley Montagu, Anthropology and Human Nature (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1957), p. 33

[6]Here as well there are many possibilities of available works that could be listed. A complete bibliography (to 1959) is found in Values, Ethics, Esthetics: A Selected Bibliography, edited by Ethel M. Albert and Clyde Kluckhohn (Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1959). Kluckhohn's own work is extensive, especially in Culture and Behavior: Collected Essays of Clyde Kluckhohn (Compiled by Richard Kluckhohn (Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe), 1962); Margaret Mead (especially Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies) (London: George Rutledge and Sons, 1935); and Ruth Benedict, Patterns of Culture (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Riverside Press, Second Edition, 1959) are both helpful in estimating the cultural and sociological influence on ethical ideals and activities. Abraham Edel's Anthropology and Ethics (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Company, 1959), and Professor A. MacBeth's Gifford Lectures in St. Andrews, Experiments in Living (London: The Macmillan Company, 1952), and Ralph Linton's The Cultural Background of Personality (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner, and Co., Ltd., 1947), give good perspectives on the topic, showing how particular ethical attitudes belong to particular societies and cultures; the same act can be a "good" in one and "evil" in another. Bronislaw Malinowski's A Scientific Theory of Culture (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944) and Morris Ginsberg's first volume of Essays in Sociology and Social Philosophy, entitled On The Diversity of Morals (London: William Heinemann Limited, 1956) are of first importance; as are also the specific studies by R. Brandt, on Hopi Ethics (University of Chicago Press, 1954); J. Ladd's The Structure of a Moral Code (Navaho ethics) (Harvard University Press, 1957). Theologian J. V. Langmead Casserly's Morals and Man in the Social Sciences is a book to which I am personally indebted, and one which is especially useful from the viewpoint of Christian ethics and theology. A most insightful volume stressing the relativity of cultural variance was written by Florence R. Kluckhohn and Fred L. Strodtbeck, Variations in Value Orientation (Evanston, Illinois: Row Peterson, 1963). Finally, although brief, the article by Professor V. A. Demant "Sociological Factors in the Determination of Christian Morals" in Christianity in its Social Context, edited by Gerald Irvine (London: S.P.C.K., 1967) is a good introduction to the problem of how one should relate a universal Christian ethic to the changing patterns of Western Society.

keeping the thesis to a manageable length. But then, what material to select was still a problem. The choice of evolutionary science was made for some specific reasons related to the relationships of science, theology, and Christian ethics in the middle-to-latter years of the twentieth century.

For one thing, the assistance which the life scientist can give to Christian ethics is not as widely heralded in theological colleges, as is the work of the psychologists, sociologists, and even the social anthropologists. Freud, Jung, Adler, and others are present in that familiar last-name-only basis. It does not seem too hazardous a guess to speculate that they, as well as Emile Durkheim, Margaret Mead, or Ruth Benedict in the social sciences, are far better known to and studied by theological students, than are Warder Clyde Allee, Pëtr Alekeseyevich Kropotkin, Conrad Hall Waddington, or Theodosius Dobzhansky. Lectures and seminars in the Sociology of Religion and Psychological Counseling are present in most theological colleges. Courses in the importance of evolution in human behaviour and the importance of genetics to ethics, often are not.[8] It was

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[8]The statement is largely based on personal observations of the various theological colleges and seminaries I am familiar with in Great Britain and the United States. There are exceptions of course. But also, in an unpublished survey conducted by Professor J. A. Whyte of all of the theological colleges in Great Britain for the World Council of Churches, the observation was confirmed in fact.

decided early in the research that the neglect of the part which the life scientist plays in understanding ethical problems and solutions seemed reason enough to justify the decision.

But, also, there is a sense in which the biological materials must be understood first, in chronology as well. Until the student can understand the genotype of the individual, he can hardly understand the development in the phenotype; i.e., before there can be an actual behaviour which can be examined in man, there must be a potential for it in the genetic information encoded in the genes. Unless we are aware that each manifestation of human behaviour is affected by the genetic make-up of the individual human being; and that no type of emotional or ethical behaviour is excluded from that source, we will fail to understand the behavioural phenomena present in modern man. Professor W. H. Thorpe noted that in recent years it is the life sciences which are providing the greatest challenges "to our generally accepted ideas and modes of thought about man, his nature and destiny." He continued:

> However problematic and doubtful some of the more esoteric implications of scientific advance may seem, there is no doubt whatever about the practical applications of science . . . The ethical problems raised by the population explosion and artificial insemination, by genetics and neuro-physiology, and by the social and mental sciences are at least as great as

> those arising from atomic energy and the H-Bomb, ... telecommunications, computers and automation.[9]

The material itself is provocative. The life scientist,[10] e.g., has noted the similarity of behaviour in animals and men, including much of that behaviour to which we attribute ethical value. In the neo-Darwinian evolution of the present day, some have understood that similarity to be evidence that certain behaviour which in man we call "good" or "evil", is an inheritance from the pre-human animal world. They have discussed biological instincts and the biological and physiological predisposition to certain types of human behaviour. They have analyzed genetical transmission of personality and non-physical traits. They have investigated the enormous problems which face moral man out of biological advances of the day, a large portion of which is surveyed in cursory style by G. Rattray Taylor in The Biological Time-Bomb.[11]

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[9]W. H. Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1965), p. x

[10]"Life Scientist" throughout this thesis is taken in its largest and most general meaning, to include all of the zoological scientists, biologists, physiologists, medical, and such related scientists who deal with the basic life stuff of man. It is possible that one whose own field is psychology could be a "life scientist", insofar as he deals with the basic mental "life" of man.

[11]Gordon Rattray Taylor, The Biological Time-Bomb (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968)

Where these scientists are correct, they will force us to re-examine our traditional Christian anthropology and ethics and in turn, our approach to many specific ethical problems. Where they are wrong then at least we must be able to refute them knowledgeably. The overwhelming popularity of some of these writers is a warning not to ignore their work. Many people are reading Robert Ardrey and Desmond Morris and Konrad Lorenz, who popularize the subject. The cult of worshippers around the memory of Teilhard de Chardin is a notable example of the widespread appeal and appreciation a theologian-scientist can obtain. We agree here with Professor H. E. Root, when he wrote that:

> The great problem of the Church (and therefore of its theologians) is to establish or re-establish some kind of vital contact with the enormous majority of human beings for whom the Christian faith is not so much unlikely as irrelevant and uninteresting. The greatest intellectual challenge to faith is simply that thoroughly secularized intelligence which is now the rule rather than the exception, whether it expresses itself in science, or philosophy or politics or the arts.[12]

Part of the answer to that "great problem" is our communication with the large group of "thoroughly secularized" and intelligent people who reside outside the boundaries of the Christian churches, and who depend on the increase of scientific knowledge for their understanding of the Universe and Man. So, it is literally an apologetic

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[12]H. E. Root, Soundings, edited by A. R. Vidler (Cambridge University Press, 1962), p. 6

task which we propose as an integral part, or at least an inevitable adjunct, of this research. No item of doctrine should be changed simply because it will become more attractive to those outside the Christian faith. But the task of seeking to work together with those who approach ethical discussion in a different way is a noble task indeed. The Christian moralist above all is placed in regular contact with those who work in ethics, and it is to him that theology can look first of all for this common assistance. J. B. Habgood once wrote:

> The wise are those who have learnt to find truth in many different places; who have enough stability not to be thrown off their balance by the latest fads and discoveries; who know the limits of their knowledge, but have a humble certainty about the truths by which they live.[13]

In a way, we are proposing work on the frontier between biology and Christian ethics, or perhaps better, as Tillich once wrote, "on the boundary between them". It is here that the issues of the modern day and our understanding of the nature of man should be brought into focus. If, in the end, the picture proves to be a distorted one, we will counter only that it will still be better than no picture at all. Bishop Ian T. Ramsey once commented that:

> . . .Frontier work between various disciplines will always appear to some unsatisfactory, and I am

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[13]J. B. Habgood, Religion and Science (London: Mills & Boon, 1964) p. 11

> conscious as anyone of the many shortcomings which the following pages exhibit. At the same time it is essential for our academic, scientific, and indeed political, health that despite the risks of appearing superficial or stupid, more and more of us should venture into cross-fertilized discussions, and that dialogue should occur between different disciplines.[14]

Professor Thorpe has pointed to the important position which biology now occupies in the current expansion of science; for, as he says: "the King of the Sciences" in tomorrow's world will be the biologist.[15] And where does that leave the Queen? No doubt she is dethroned, from her literal reign at least. But then theology's glorious reign was ended long ago, and as H. Richard Niebuhr once quipped: "She never was the Queen," for at her best "Theology has always been the servant of the sciences."[16] She serves as the interpreter of truth, relating the findings of the other sciences to the unifying principles of the universe. And that, they cannot do. Theology has its own domain, from which it does in fact rule, but only in that it has a theological truth which is outside the normal boundaries of purely scientific pursuits.

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[14] Ian T. Ramsey, Religion and Science: Conflict and Synthesis (London: S.P.C.K., 1964), p. viii

[15] Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, pp. 131, 133

[16] H. Richard Niebuhr, Journal of Religion, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 1-5, esp. p. 3

As a school-boy, I read Huxley's Brave New World with fascinated interest. Now as I read it again, fascination is replaced by disquiet and fear - fear that the new world will bring us a controlled and manipulated man in a controlled and impersonal world. Some new world is coming, in which brave new men will have to live. The new biology will surely have an important place in it. My goal, and a goal which is shared by many others whose work is covered in this thesis, is to insure that Christian ethics has one too. James Sellers wrote recently in his Theological Ethics:

> We live in an age in which man is demonstrating that he can do almost anything. This is as it should be, if he is truly created in God's image. But it also means he needs ethics more than ever. For the man who can do almost anything is more hard put to decide what to do than the man who cannot do very much in any case. Twentieth-century man has new power and unprecendented choices; hence his new responsibility to reflect on ethics.[17]

The greater the possibilities, the graver are the dangers, but the more urgent is our responsibility to act creatively in the new and coming world.

Once we delimited the study to the life scientist, there was finally the problem of deciding which scholars and which biological sub-divisions we should choose. Many scientists are involved in research which sheds light on

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[17]James Sellers, Theological Ethics (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), p. xi

the origin and functioning of human behaviour. The psychologist studies the behaviour of man through his living psyche in the individual life. The ethologist studies man in his relationships and behaviour in his distinctive characteristics. The geneticist studies man through his heredity. The paleontologist studies man through the demands of the developing species. The biochemist studies man in the structure of the cells, etc. All of these, and more, converge in the subject matter of this thesis.

There are of course difficulties in separating the working field of any particular behavioural scientist. Over twenty years ago, Dr. Ralph Linton wrote of that new science which would be "devoted to the dynamics of human behaviour," and which would arise out of the collaboration of all the scientists who were trying to understand man and his problems. The pioneers in that science, Linton said, will be "sustained by the belief that somewhere in this vast territory there lies hidden the knowledge which will arm man for his greatest victory, the conquest of himself."[18] Those pioneers are the settlers who occupy the territory of this study.

Finally, there was the problem of which Christian moralists to use. From part 1 we derive a set of simple

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[18] Linton, Cultural Background of Personality, p. 99

criteria by which we then propose to investigate a Christian ethic.[19] Once the criteria are set, we chose those writers who best represented either an affirmative or a negative analysis. We chose Karl Barth because it seemed that this giant of the twentieth century theology was a good test case for the use of scientific material in Christian ethical writing. Barth's epistemology would seem to preclude the possibility of his presence, but Barth is truer to his responsibility than he is to the Barthianism which some attach to his name. Barth does deal with ethical issues that require a knowledge of the life scientist's material.

F. R. Tennant was selected because of his early and impressive use of scientific material. He provides a good model on how a theologian should proceed. His concern was initially with the Doctrine of the Fall and Original Sin, in a day when those arguments demanded more attention. He depended on the then current evolutionary theory as the starting point for his approach to the problem. His importance to ethics is made clear when we realize that the doctrine of sin, to Tennant, was another way of analyzing moral imperfections of individual and corporate man.

Bishop F. R. Barry is present because he brings the subject down to the practical interest in Christian ethical

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[19]See ahead to pages 197-207.

problems which is so characteristic of my own interest in the study. He has been publishing books and articles on ethics since the first decade of the twentieth century. It is helpful to note his development as new materials became available.

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The entire research has proceeded under the supervision of Rev. Professor James A. Whyte, Professor of Practical Theology and Christian Ethics at St. Mary's- both in Scotland and later during his sabbatical visit to the United States. I would not want to blame him for any of the conclusions in this writing; nor would I want to attribute my developing ideas to his assistance alone. But, so warmly and completely was he interested in the work, and so ably did he get me to the heart of the matter, that at any point where he might wish to claim this thesis as his own, I would happily grant his right. Meanwhile, he will surely see himself walking through its pages (at times possibly even running away!), and perhaps he will see the both of us, still arguing a few of the points we hammered out in his third floor study in St. Andrews, or while he was visiting Louisville Theological Seminary in Kentucky. I am most grateful for that, as well as for the friendship which he and Mrs. Whyte offered to us, a friendship which we treasure still.

Others at St. Mary's were also helpful. I should especially mention Professor N. H. G. Robinson, whose own writing on Tennant, and whose helpful comments on my work, assisted me greatly. Dr. Calder Moir and Mr. Douglas Trotter took a kindly interest in my research, as did Professor George Hall who was at that time visiting from Colgate Rochester Divinity School. Their help and encouragement were deeply appreciated.

A special word of gratitude is due also to Dr. H. Cecil Macgregor, lecturer in Zoology at the university, who patiently read through the entire first part of the thesis, and offered advice on some specific aspects of the work. Besides, his warm comments of the writing also seemed to make the research infinitely worthwhile. Some others, in smaller, but important ways, directed me to books and authors and periodicals and ideas that I would not have found without their help. A word of thanks to Dr. Adrian Horridge, Director of the Gatty Marine Laboratory in St. Andrews, who helped materially with bibliography; to Dr. Preston S. Cutler, Executive Secretary of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioural Sciences, who prepared a complete list of fellows at the Center who over many years had shown interest in the topic; to Father John L. Russell, Heythrop College, Oxford, who was especially helpful in providing some directions to the background of the Roman Catholic position on the doctrine of

evolution, official, and unofficial, and whose correspondence on current Roman Catholic ethical writings was enjoyable and informative.

Some others, great, warm and wonderful friends in the Royal Burgh of St. Andrews were not so helpful. They tried to take my attention away from my work, by insisting that we play golf at The Old Course, or that we attend the festivities at the local Auction Hall, or that we walk along the North Sea and talk over ancient days and intriguing ghost stories in the Kingdom of Fife, or that we rush down to the once a decade Bon Spiel at Kilconguhar. But they made Scotland seem like home to our family - a remembrance deep and dear to each of us.

A final glad word to Mr. Dugald MacArthur and his staff at the University Library, whose endless patience was excelled only by their pleasantness that made the daily treks to the library a good and happy time; my thanks to all of them. And a further note of gratitude to Dr. Dikran Hadidrian, Librarian of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and to Mrs. Amal Marks, his assistant, for all of their help and interest, since my return to Pittsburgh.@

Near the end of a five-year project a researcher gets the feeling that he has been working in his own wee vacuum, bound in by the piles of notes and papers and three-by-five reference cards; bound in by the definition and delimitation of his topic; and bound most of all by the limitations of time and space to make the research complete.

@ Against her wishes I thank my sister Alice Williams who typed the entire thesis.

So, this as other theses, must be seen as the opening step of the project. I take heart at the words which Professor John MacMurray spoke to me in Edinburgh five years ago. Professor MacMurray said that each graduate thesis should be regarded as just a beginning. It should indicate where the subject begins and where it heads next. A Ph.D. thesis, after all, is not one's entire life's work. Its purposes should be defined and a recapitulation given as to where we are now.

Where it has gone from the beginning is into the lives of those whom I teach and to whom I minister here in Western Pennsylvania. Seminary students have now shared the enthusiasm I have for this topic in my lecture program with them. Countless couples and individuals and families have forwarded the concern of this thesis out of theory into the practice of their lives. Why we do what we do is an endless search. No one really knows the answer to that question. But one comes the closer to it as he journeys to the heart of the conclusions and concerns of a thesis which brings The Life Sciences and Christian Ethics together. For these few years, at least, I know of no greater nor more helpful journey.

Rev. Richard M. Cromie
Southminster House
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
June, 1974

I. INTRODUCTION

A. General

One man's premise is another man's problem. The beginning point for one is beyond the conclusion of the other. So that the setting of this thesis will be clear at the start, let me enumerate a few of the premises from which I commenced the study, and which were confirmed in the research.

Two separate convictions converged in the background of the writing of this thesis. One is my belief that Christian ethics begins in the study of man; in Christian anthropology rather than any other theological doctrine. This is not to say that other doctrines are unimportant. It is to say that we cannot speak realistically about man and his ethics until we understand the man himself. And second, is the conviction that we can begin to understand man in a study of the evolutionary process and beyond that, in the contributions which have been made regarding his behaviour by the contemporary life scientists. The first is supported by Professor Norman Pittenger while commenting on a statement made by Dr. Georges Florowsky: "You can best understand what is true about God and everything else, if you discover

what is true about man." Said Pittenger:

> This seems to me a very penetrating statement. It is even more true about any religious faith: if you want to know what a given religion, a given faith, believes about God, nature, history, you should first see what it believes about human nature . . . It means simply that the way in which man is understood, and his significance determined, will give us as nothing else can, an insight into the setting, historic and cosmic, in which man makes his appearance.[1]

It also gives us an insight into his ethical behaviour and its ethical significance and implications. The two convictions converge when we move to the topic itself.

In his Essays on Human Evolution, Sir Arthur Keith asked the serious question, "If man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever," as the Westminster Shorter Catechism begins, "then why has man been given a nature so incapable of fulfilling such a mode of life?"[2] The question is not new with Keith. Nor is his answer which concludes bluntly:

> No human community could observe this injunction with any degree of strictness, nor even one day in seven, and survive on this earth as we know it. No: the "chief end" cannot be as the Westminster divines formulated it.[3]

We need not accept the rejection of the Catechism to agree with the intent of Keith's inquiry. There is some

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[1] W. Norman Pittenger, The Christian Understanding of Human Nature (London: James Nisbet and Co., Ltd., 1964) pp. 13-14

[2] Sir Arthur Keith, Essays on Human Evolution (London: Watts and Co., 1946), p. 16 (American title: Evolution and Ethics)

[3] Ibid., p. 16

room in our inquiries for questions which have to do with the basic nature of man; his evolutionary origin, his genetic predisposition to certain types of behaviour; what is, or could be his "chief end". To borrow Professor Waddington's question and ask: "Why has man so often embraced systems which one might have thought he would intuitively recognize as evil?"[4] The answer to that question is complex. It plunges us deep into the question of why man is the way he is, and how he got that way. His sin and his alienation from God form the traditional Christian answer. But these, though carrying a theological truth which we want to reaffirm, do not define the details of what man is and why he is alienated. Man obviously does embrace systems and perform acts which are evil - but how did he get that way? If we reject a literal reading of the Garden of Eden story in Genesis, and accept an evolutionary origin of man, we are left searching for an answer which takes account both of his evolutionary origin, and his "spiritual nature".

Some would think that we profit more by examining man in his present circumstances, or in light of the Bible alone, or in the belief that Christian ethics should condemn evil and be concerned with the elimination of certain "bad" behaviour - not with its origin and development. Moralists are concerned with the long detailed list of

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[4] Conrad Hall Waddington, The Ethical Animal (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1960), p. 16

modern deviations from good Christianity in the list of personal failings of man to individual man. That is critical. But here we have a previous question, one which takes us back into deeper issues. Before we can rightly discuss whether man is or should be honest; whether war is or is not justified; whether the new sexual morality is Christian or can be; whether we should use love as the norm for all ethical judgments, or some other; we must inquire whether man is capable of doing the very things the moralist asks; whether his basic nature is inclined toward them; whether it is possible for him to attain the goals; and whether he is able to control himself in his environment.

Waddington, from the viewpoint of science, reminds us that "philosophers have for the most part concerned themselves with an issue which is actually not the most important."[5] What we need, he elaborates, is some "guidance by which we can direct our activities". By the time we begin to reflect, we already have what we call our "ethical feelings of right and wrong". Philosophers have felt that their task is to "clarify the nature of these ethical feelings", or to distil general principles which would be "both guides to action and would still remain ethical in quality".[6] But, what is demanded of each generation is:

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[5]Waddington, Ethical Animal, op. cit., p. 19

[6]Waddington, ibid., p. 20

> A theory of ethics which is neither a mere rationalization of prejudices, nor a philosophical discourse so abstract as to be irrelevant to the practical problems with which mankind is faced at that time.[7]

What we need is an ethical theory that contains both the truth of our existence and relevance to our behaviour. And, as a biological scientist, Waddington concludes that "the framework within which one can carry on a rational discussion of different systems of ethics, and to make comparisons of their various merits and demerits, is to be found in a consideration of animal and human evolution."[8]

We hold here that Waddington makes a mistake when he bases his entire examination of ethics on evolution,[9] but our investigation does join him in examining whether and how moral values are related to that source. If good and evil have their roots deep in the primeval past; if they have evolved on the basis of that which gives superior survival value to the tribe or the individual who possesses them; if by virtue of their presence in the past, they are present now as well; if we carry with us, bred into our genetic make-up, tendencies which no amount of psychological or spiritual juggling can remove, or even remake, then it is imperative that the student of Christian ethics determine what it means for the

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[7] Ibid., p. 19

[8] Ibid., p. 23

[9] Cf. to the Discussion of Current Views of Evolutionary Ethics: Waddington, pp. 137-148.

study of our subject, and whether contemporary Christian scholars have taken it into consideration when they do their work.

H. Wheeler Robinson once summed it up neatly when he cautioned that:

> The Christian must not forget that every generation has its part to play in the unceasing evolution of Christian doctrine, and that our part today is a somewhat stirring one. The primitive conceptions of Hebrew cosmology are replaced in the modern mind by the evolutionary view of man; the wider horizon of nature and history involves many changes in earlier conclusions. Some problems fall into the background, others emerge for the first time, others again reveal their depth and difficulty by their presence in the wider as in the narrower horizon. We cannot evade them, except by being false to the stewardship of a great inheritance. The Christian doctrine of man is not to be secluded from the thought of the age in timorous unbelief; it is to be employed amid the common wealth of the world, so that it may be worthily developed by us, as it was by those who went before us.[10]

The Christian ethic also is to be employed amid the common wealth of the world, so that it, too, may be worthily developed in the future. Professor Robinson's statement was written almost sixty years ago, but it belongs to our day as well. It is still a "stirring part" that we have to play, for as R. R. Williams notes:

> Out of all our study of science we should collectively by now have gained not only knowledge but also some wisdom about the meaning of things that we can apply to human relations. Clearly this wisdom must come predominently from a consideration of the evolutionary process, for that is the process . . . whereby man developed his present powers . . .[11]

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[10] H. Wheeler Robinson, The Christian Doctrine of Man, p. 3 Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 3rd ed. 1934; 1st 1911

[11] R. R. Williams, "Natural Science and Social Problems", The American Scientist, 1948, 36:116-126. Quoted by G. G. Simpson, The Meaning of Evolution (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 281

What, after all, is moral goodness? Is it good because it establishes a good society, where goodness is defined as that which worked to survival and to the general accord of men? Is it good because it is a lesson well learnt from the past or is it preparing the way to a glorious future? Or is there, as we have believed, an intrinsic good, beyond all possible relation and reference either to origin or result? Is Christ's command to love based on the divine law which he received from God, or is it part and parcel of good humanity which he somehow epitomized in his brief teachings? If the command of an omniscient Creator is controlled by, and interpreted through, the natural development of human behaviour; if what we have called the immutable eternal laws of God, become changeable through genetic mutation or natural selection, then we need to adopt a new approach to our ethics.

"There can be no doubt", Professor (now Bishop) Ian T. Ramsey opened one of his books:

> That today the greatest tensions (between science, philosophy, and religion) arise around the concept of human personality, and generate many perplexing questions. How far do developments in molecular biology drain human personality of any distinctiveness? How far can human beings and human behaviour be satisfactorily accounted for by such developments of the theory of evolution by natural selection as are made possible by recent research in genetics? How far have developments in neurology eroded that moral responsibility which many believed was distinctively personal?[12]

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[12] Ian T. Ramsey, Biology and Personality (Oxford: Basil, Blackwell Co., 1965) (Ramsey editor), p. 1 Unfortunately Bishop Ramsey died an untimely death during the writing of this thesis.

Those are the questions of this thesis which force the moralist to lift himself up out of his everyday world, and to look back into the development of what man was, what he is, and what he can become. The desire to deal with man "as we have him" is commendable. But "man as he is" is a matter of interpretation.

This thesis deals principally with the problems of the present. But to get to the present it is always necessary to trace something of the historical movements of the past. This I have tried to do carefully, but in a minimum of space. It could appear to an historically minded reader that I have made short work of the long historical process which preceded what we have now. But for our purpose, just a few trends seemed mandatory. It seemed essential to cover some of the developments in bringing together a modern consensus-like view of evolutionary biology. It was also important to include some of the historical arguments concerning the evolutionary ethic. In that regard, to show how Darwin introduced the subject of the relationship between evolution and ethics, and to show how others, including a few of our contemporaries, have misrepresented Darwin's work on the evolution of moral thoughts and acts.

The performance of both science and theology along the way is lamentably imbalanced. It was largely filled with bitter arguments over matters incidental to the subject, or petty peeves on the part of the participants.

The "warfare" has been intense, especially in the subject of the evolutionary origin of man. It has seemed so sophisticated to announce that theology was foolish, as indeed it sometimes was. But science has not been guiltless either. Reinhold Niebuhr once referred to Brock's well-known comment regarding the defenders of the Christian faith against the advance of evolution on the uniqueness of man. Brock wrote: "They were telling a lot of little lies in the interest of a great truth."[13] But, Niebuhr responded with the accusation that the scientists were "telling a lot of little truths about causes which could be fashioned into a big lie", and that was far worse.

> Subsequent developments, after the triumph of Darwin, proved that the religious impulse to defend the unique dignity of man was not as foolish as it seemed, though the methods of defense were both foolish and futile.[14]

That issue is still being settled. Little truths can still be used in the support of big lies about what man is - a point which we will later clarify in "the Uniqueness of Man".[15]

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[13]Reinhold Niebuhr, "Christianity and Darwin's Revolution", in A Book That Shook the World: Anniversary Essays on Charles Darwin's Origin of the Species, edited by Ralph Buchsbaum (Pittsburgh: University Press, 1967, Third Printing, 1967), p. 32

[14]Ibid., p. 33

[15]Cf. pp. 76-92.

But with Darwin himself we will emphasize that:

> There is grandeur in this view of life with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.[16]

These are the well-known concluding words of the Origin. As the re-issued and complete autobiography shows,[17] Darwin probably later changed his mind, or at least his emphasis, and found courage to express his religious doubts about "The Creator who breathed life". But there can be no doubt about the grandeur.

It is the complete man we are trying to discover, one who is a combination of natural origin and supernatural destiny. Never before have we had the quantity of information available for an adequate description of human nature as we have now. The problem is to use it wisely.

> In an unbelievably precise manner, man is able to predict the occurrence of natural events, such as weather, crop yield, or erosion and deposition of soil. With equal assurance he can predict the behaviour of man made things such as an atom bomb and a space satellite. But man's predictions are lamentably uncertain in foretelling what his use shall be of this new knowledge and power, or where he may next turn. Despite elaborate precautions, it is theoretically possible for the human race to destroy itself accidently through misinterpretation of the motives

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[16] Charles Darwin, On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1860), p. 490

[17] The Autobiography of Charles Darwin 1809-1882, With Original Omissions Restored. Ed. Nora Barlow (Darwin's granddaughter) (London: Collins, 1958)

> of other human beings. Man's need both to understand and to predict his own actions becomes a crucial condition for the survival of the species.[18]

On a lesser, but individually more important scale, man's need to understand and predict his own actions and those of others, is the essential condition for the survival of his daily life, his business success, his family, his happiness, his Church, and his society.

The theories of the behavioural sciences are at present tentative, and almost surely in some cases wrong. But, as Professor Thorpe reminds: "The tentative natures of theories is part of the very stuff of science and is in no sense reason for failing to consider and discuss them from every angle."[19] We repeat, in part, from Thorpe:

> All of our horizons are darkened by their menace, and at the same time lit by their promise. This is every bit as true of the applications of the biological sciences as of the physical sciences. The ethical problems raised by the population explosion and artificial insemination, by genetics and neurophysiology, and by the social and mental sciences are at least as great as those arising from atomic energy and the H-Bomb, from space travel and ultrasonic flight, from telecommunications, computers, and automation.[20]

There will be problems which the new biology and the new Christian ethics will have to face. New claims are made regularly. Sperm banks of human spermatozoa are not only a possibility which Mueller once advised, but they are actual repositories this very day which are

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[18]Arnold Abrams, ed. Unfinished Tasks in the Behavioral Sciences (Baltimore: The Williams and Wilkins Company, 1964), p. xiv

[19]Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, p. x

[20]Ibid.

constantly being used in AID and other programs of artificial insemination. Host mothers and donor fathers are not only possibilities, but actual events of our time. The next generation could already be formed artificially. Reproductive physiologists will be increasing the possibilities. Abortions have already been performed in many parts of the world when chromosomal tests seem to indicate imperfections in the foetus. Abortion reform has come in different parts of the world, including Great Britain and the United States.

There is no limit to how we can affect the future of the human race, either by limiting the numbers, or by altering the random selection of parents today. Eugenics and euthenics are possible today, and in the future with refined techniques and increasing knowledge, we could alter a population so completely that we cannot even guess the social consequences. Someone will have to decide what we are going to do, what knowledge or technique of tampering with the human body or the human race will we allow? The Church, through its Christian moralists should be there at the time of the decisions, equipped with the knowledge and prepared to use it to make clear what the world and life are all about.

> . . . biological research is in a ferment, creating and promising methods of interference with "natural processes" which could destroy or could transform every aspect of human life which we value.
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> Urgently it is necessary for men and women of every race and colour and creed, every intelligent individual of our world, to consider the present and imminent possibilities. They must be prepared to defend what they hold good for themselves and their

> neighbours, and more importantly, to use the immense creative opportunities for a happier and healthier world.[21]

No article of belief, no expression of faith, no system of ethics will gain any lasting credence with the educated world of modern man, unless it is firmly grounded in the facts of human existence. Or, as Professor Whyte once commented in our discussions regarding this thesis: "To embody principles one has to take account of the body. If you ignore the reality of man, you establish rules for a man who does not exist."

If we are to preserve the Christian doctrine of man: man as created in the image of God for a special relationship with the Creator; we cannot do it at the cost of refusing to be honest, no more than we can believe that the earth is flat by refusing to look at the pictures taken by the astronauts from outer space.

We agree with Dr. A. R. Vidler when he writes in Soundings:

> We can best serve the cause of truth and of the Church by candidly confessing where our perplexities lie, and not by making claims which, so far as we can see, theologians are not at present in a position to justify.[22]

"Our task is to try to see what the questions are that we ought to be facing in the nineteen-sixties."[23] The sixties

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[21] Gordon Wolstenholme, Man and His Future (London: J.and A. Churchill, Ltd., 1963), p. v. (Wolstenholme, editor)

[22] Vidler, Soundings, p. ix

[23] Ibid., p. xi

have already passed; we must now substitute the nineteen-seventies, the eighties, and the remaining years of this century.

B. The Theologian's Use of Science

Before proceeding further, we should make clear what general principles we are applying regarding the theologian's use of science. We refer directly to the argument over whether the scientist should be involved in ethical discussions, and more especially to the matter of the "is" and its relationship to the "ought" and one aspect of the argument concerns the "naturalistic fallacy" first presented by Professor G. E. Moore.

The role of science, it is sometimes argued, is and should remain a descriptive one, without any attitude qua science, on what value is involved. In opposition, we will conclude that it is erroneous to attempt to exclude the scientist from moral deliberations. To be sure, a biologist does not become an expert in morals simply because he is expert in biology. But an absolute distinction only serves to damage the case of the moralist.

Some years ago Professor Kellogg complained that so long as the biologist limited himself to the general statements about "lungs, lives, skeleton and ductless glands," he was not questioned; but when he went further he was rejected as being irrelevant. Further he noted

the casual way the information is judged and rejected ad hominem:

> When their talk is about the behaviour of human beings, about their psychology, their heredity, their responses to environment and education, and their position in Nature, then their talk is tested by the miscellaneous personal observations and prejudices and desires and hopes and beliefs of each individual, and it is accepted or not as it confirms or contradicts each one's notions derived from these things.[24]

Perhaps the theologian is better prepared to understand Kellogg's complaint than most. In matters of Biblical scholarship and theology also, many untrained individuals test statements and reflection by how well it confirms their own "miscellaneous personal observations and prejudices." But Kellogg notes that:

> In many of the broad problems of human life arising in connection with such subjects as education, militarism, eugenics, delinquency, and others usually regarded as chiefly belonging to the province of humanities, he (the biologist) can readily perceive biological aspects.[25]

The "naturalistic fallacy" argument of G. E. Moore dates back to 1903,[26] when Professor Moore enunciated a "prolegomena to any future ethics that can possibly pretend to be scientific." Moore's claim was pretentious, but there can be no denial of the enormous impact which his ideas have had on twentieth century philosophy and

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[24]Vernon Kellogg, Human Life: As The Biologist Sees It (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1922), p. 100

[25]Ibid., p. 48

[26]G. E. Moore, Principia Ethica (Cambridge: University Press, 1903)

ethics. In some ways it has become an all-inclusive phrase which automatically discredits the opposition. To be accused of the "naturalistic fallacy" is normally an attempt to close the argument.

Yet it will help to clarify our point if we analyze briefly what Moore in fact meant, and how it relates to other concerns within the Christian ethic. The "fallacy" with which Moore was concerned, arises out of a concern for the definition of goodness in itself, and not in the narrower setting of an anti-scientific bias. The background question with Moore at this point is "How is good to be defined? The answer is that it cannot be defined, and that is all I have to say about it."[27] The "fallacy" to Moore was the attempt to define or describe what goodness is in terms other than the intrinsic nature of goodness itself. To Moore there could be no specific description of goodness. The "good" is not judged by the scientific criteria of evolutionary study, but neither can it be defined by "the structures of Platonic forms," the "maxim of moral philosophy," or "the detailed laws of Scripture." There is alone "an indescribable but intuitable non-natural quality" in the definition of the good. Moore quotes Bishop Butler's statement of finality, "Everything is what it is and not another thing." The fallacy applies with equal force to forms of metaphysical

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27 Principia Ethica, quoted in Yervant H. Krikorian, Contemporary Philosophic Problems, edited by Abraham Edel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), pp. 469-70

as well as naturalistic ethics. The good cannot be reduced to properties of analysis of definition.

We will note that Moore is still followed by some moral philosophers, but as H. J. Paton says in another context: "I believe it possible, however, both to hold that "goodness" is objective and independent of the whims and fancies, the impulses and desires of individual men; and also to hold that the goodness of a thing may vary in different circumstances and must stand in some necessary relation to a rational will." The question of whether Moore was correct in asserting that intrinsic good is undefinable has also been successfully challenged by Professor William Frankena in The Philosophy of G. E. Moore.[28] We join that challenge here.

One problem, as G. J. Warnock noted, is that no argument is possible with Moore at this point. Moore alleges that it is true but "there is really nothing here for critical discussion to take hold of."[29] Whatever is known intuitively is known intuitively ad infinitum. With Moore's fallacy, value is a subjective fact, a simple quality like the color yellow, and cannot be explained unless one knows and agrees from the start.

Professor Burkill goes further[30] with his argument

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[28]Paul A. Schlipp, The Philosophy of G. E. Moore (New York: Tudor Publishing Co., Second Edition, 1952), chap. 3

[29]G. J. Warnock, Contemporary Moral Philosophy (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1966)

[30]T. A. Burkill, God and Reality in Modern Thought (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963), chap. 7, pp. 109-10

against Moore when he explains that if you cannot define or analyze value, then values become purely private estimates and subject, as Paton said, to "the whims and fancies, the impulses and desires of individual men." That was not, of course, Moore's purpose, but without some criteria with which we can reflect on goodness, a simple tautology results. If Moore's fallacy is the standard, then all ethical pursuits to understand, analyze, and define goodness are doomed to ineffectiveness from the start.

The strength of Moore's argument is that we do not serve our ethical purpose well if we equate evolutionary trends with goodness itself. There is a sense, as Bishop Barry noted, where "ought is unique and irreducible . . . yet," as also Barry wrote, "we cannot conceive of values as existing ghostlike in a conceptual stratosphere."[31]

But, to bring this brief discussion of the naturalistic fallacy to an end, we conclude that if Moore is used to deny the importance of scientific information to an understanding and modification of the moral issues involved in human goodness, we would object that he does not bring the final word. While we will not attempt to equate goodness with "that which is," or "that which has evolved," we will continue the attempt to define

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[31]F. R. Barry, Christian Ethics & Secular Society (London: Holder & Stoughton, 1966), p. 51. For the sake of fairness, we should note that Barry goes much further and seems to support Moore's fallacy on the same page.

and analyze what can be offered to "goodness" in the evolutionary approach.

We are not arguing here for a reductionistic view of the moral life. Morality is not a way to adapt to the environment. Neither do we wish to conclude that all of ethics or morals are reducible to scientific investigation. There is a legitimate realm of ethical reflection, as there is a realm of manhood itself, which is outside of the verification of the research scientist. Professor W. H. Thorpe, himself a scientist, insists that ethical value must be held ultimately to be scientifically unverifiable.

But we will also show that while we do not accept a naturalistic view of ethics, neither do we accept what could be called a theological or "a moral reductionism," where the theologian-moralist can speak meaningfully and completely without the scientifically-acquired information about man. There is a sense in which the rules for human behaviour can be judged by how adequately they fulfill the values derived out of the framework of what we know about man in his natural setting.

Dr. Abraham Edel notes the point more exactly when he writes:

> Even if philosophy is primarily concerned with analysis and evaluation, it cannot neglect the material or empirical elements in its analysis, nor the factual conditions which make one line of analysis more fruitful than another. And though it may be more concerned with description of fact and causal investigation, scientific work cannot prudently neglect analysis of concepts nor founder among vague questions. The

> enterprise of description, analysis, causal investigation and evaluation certainly have to be kept distinct, but not as separate provinces to be parcelled out to philosophers and social scientists.[32]

Edel has a proper distinction: though science may be "more concerned with description of fact and causal investigation," it cannot neglect, nor should it avoid the properties reserved by moral philosophers. The distinction of duties and areas of investigation are for the sake of convenience and organization of the investigator, even as two members of the same football team are assigned separate areas of the field for sake of orderly and effective play. In the same book, Anthropology and Ethics, Dr. Edel concludes: "We do not propose the merger of anthropology and philosophy, but rather a working partnership which avoids any jostling for primacy, or quarrels over vested rights in either methods of problems."[33]

Professor Thorpe warned that:

> It is essential that we cease tottering from one crisis to the next. To do this it is needful not only to love the good and our fellow man (which is of course basic) but also to ensure that all branches of science, arts and technology are harmoniously developed in the service of man as a physical and spiritual being; for if we neglect even one of them too long we may be heading for disaster.[34]

As a theme for his book, Science, Man and Morals, Thorpe

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[32]Abraham Edel and May Edel, Anthropology and Ethics (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1959), p. 5

[33]Ibid., p. 5

[34]Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, p. 120

announced "the impressive and growing understanding of the unitary foundation underlying all experience - scientific, artistic, and religious." This, said Thorpe, is a "kind of inexorable ground-swell of man's awareness of himself and the world", an awareness that was impossible before Darwin, and improbable long after that. This theme:

> . . . finds expression in many of the most profound writers of recent times; including philosophers and theologians as far apart as Whitehead, Berdayeff, (sic) Collingwood, and some of the existentialist school through Teilhard de Chardin to scientists such as Eddington, Schrödinger, Hinshelwood and Polanyi. The theme is tremendous.[35]

We should also add Professor Thorpe himself to that list, whose expanding work is becoming increasingly important in this field.[36] As well we could add others such as Professor Theodosius Dobzhansky, Sir Allister Hardy, and Professor Edmund Sinnott. The theme is indeed "tremendous", and we want to protect the level ground which leads to this increasing awareness of the unitary foundation which underlies all of our experience. To attempt to demarcate the line between science and ethics too sharply is to violate it.

The point can be made clearer with a detailed analysis of Professor William Quillian's The Moral Theory of Evolutionary Naturalism. The problem with which Quillian deals is that of "the validity of the ethical

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[35]Ibid., p. xi

[36]Thorpe was recently the Gifford Lecturer at St. Andrews.

theory of Evolutionary Naturalism, with particular attention to the theory's exclusion of religion and metaphysical considerations.[37] His book is concerned to show, as Moore was in a larger concern, that the evolutionary naturalist goes too far when he moves out of his "purely descriptive role as scientist" and begins to discuss the values involved in human ethical response. Our argument is largely one which respects the point which Quillian is trying to make, but also one which concludes that Quillian himself goes too far in the distinction which he makes between descriptive and normative science. There is surely a place to stand between the supposed intrusion of a scientist like Julian Huxley into ethics, and in Quillian's exclusion of all such scientists from ethical decisions.

Professor Quillian introduces some outstanding representatives of the evolutionary naturalistic school, most of them from the late nineteenth century and very early twentieth, including Charles Darwin, W. K. Clifford, Leslie Stephen, Herbert Spencer, & J.M. Guyau. Most of them are discussed later in this thesis. He notes that while the individual writers have individual approaches to the subject, and while they proceed with different emphases, they also agree in substance on the end and standard of morality. "Though the standard is not phrased

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[37] William F. Quillian, Jr., The Moral Theory of Evolutionary Naturalism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), p. 21

in identically the same words by different evolutionary writers, the meaning is in all cases ultimately the same."[38]

The standard chosen by all these writers is the health and survival of society: "the evolutionary moralist seeks to discover ethical maxims or moral rules which prescribe the kinds of action that will further the end of social health and survival."[39] As opposed to some other description of the "good", the naturalist posits human happiness and/or survival as the ultimate goal of a good moral code (a matter wherein he is not unique), and judges moral ideas or acts on the basis of whether they are likely to further that end.

Quillian acknowledges the worth of these theories when he admits without equivocation that they are valuable—first because they remind us that our present ideas of morality "have not always been what they are today, but are the outcome of a long period of development."[40] Also, "the evidence presented by these writers gives plausibility to the theory that natural selection, with its principle of survival value, has played an important part in the origin and development of primitive morality." And thirdly, these theories give "a more scientifically adequate explanation . . . of the instinctive element

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[38]Quillian, Ibid., p. 58-59

[39]Ibid., p. 60

[40]Ibid., p. 73

which plays an important part in the moral life of man." In other words, from the historical point of view, the evolutionary naturalist can provide helpful comments on the history of morality.

> We cannot fully comprehend all that is involved in moral conduct unless we dig down to the roots of human behaviour in the effort to understand the nature of the primary innate tendencies, whether they be regarded as definite and well-marked instincts, or simply as the "primary tissue of experience."[41]

Quillian notes also that these modern evolutionary thinkers are not the first to investigate the non-rational origins of human behaviour as an aid to understanding morality:

> It has been a concern of moralists from the time of the earliest ethical speculations. All through the history of ethical theory one finds an interest in presenting the non-rational basis of morality, whether in terms of pleasure-seeking, or sympathy, or egoism, or some other kind of "natural tendency."[42]

The third aspect of these theories is that they have a commendable social emphasis, which while the application of evolutionary theory "may not really support all their contentions . . . nevertheless, the social interest is clear" - they regard the welfare of the group as the summum bonum, as opposed to the atomic society of the utilitarians. Quillian is fair to the approach taken by the evolutionary moralists.

He then moves to some preliminary criticisms of the evolutionary ethics. The criticisms are mainly related

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[41] Ibid., pp. 73-74

[42] Ibid., p. 74

to the hypothetical controversy which Quillian has with those who attempt to deny the ultimacy of the moral philosopher in ethics.

The first is the criticism that:

> Throughout most discussions of evolutionary ethics, there is the assumption that changes which occur in the bodily organization of an individual, are passed on to the succeeding generation.[43]

That is to say, the proponents of evolutionary ethics depend upon a Lamarckian understanding of the inheritance of the characteristics which an individual acquires over the course of his life;[44] a doctrine which as Quillian surmised is almost certainly incorrect. He is not wrong in that conclusion. He is wrong in making the assumption. But then Quillian goes on to explain the problem as it appears in Darwin's understanding of instinct and Spencer's understanding of intuition. The negative criticism of these two men (at this point anyway) is also correct. It is not, however, a criticism of the evolutionary naturalist or the evolutionary ethic per se. It is, rather, a specific criticism which Quillian borrows from his earlier argument with some individual evolutionary moralists. Some evolutionary moralists did in fact work from a Lamarckian understanding of inheritance,

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[43]Ibid., pp. 74-75

[44]Lamarckianism is discussed in much greater detail in this thesis, circa p. 62.

probably Darwin himself also did. But Quillian further writes:

> In thus thinking that environmental changes produce in individuals variations which are then transmitted to succeeding generations, the evolutionary moralist makes an error - or really a series of errors - which preclude him from discovering or recognizing the emergence of new characters.[45]

In fact, the evolutionary moralist does no such thing. Quillian may be noting a deficiency in Darwin. But he leaves the evolutionary ethic itself, and more especially a few of the modern versions, completely untouched.[46] They do not depend on this mistake of Darwin and Spencer. Both Sir Julian Huxley and Professor C. H. Waddington, e.g., two leading exponents of the contemporary evolutionary ethics, have discredited the belief in an inheritance of acquired characteristics. Quillian noted an insufficiency of some of the earlier writers alone.

Neither is there a problem for the evolutionary moralist as Quillian implies, in his account of the emergency of new characteristics. Whether he believes in Lamarckian inheritance or not, the naturalist could simply counter by saying that the emergence of the new characters does not depend on acquired inheritance. Rather, new characteristics are a result of many other factors which operate genetically at the inception of the individual

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[45] Quillian, ibid., p. 76

[46] Waddington's Science and Ethics, e.g., is included in the bibliography, but not mentioned in the text.

life.[47] Still further, at this point, the evolutionary interest in ethics depends not only on the emergence of the new characteristic, of whatever origin, in the genotype itself; but also it depends on the continuance and the standardization of the emergent characteristic in the phenotype, which are assured in the entire process of cultural and psycho-social evolution. Quillian's first criticism is not one which is directly related to the facts of the evolutionary ethic itself.

His two other preliminary criticisms are: one, that it errs in accepting the position of the "moral sense school," which makes the mistake of holding that an individual senses immediately the rightness or wrongness of an act, and two, that the evolutionary ethic depends for its beginning on "the hedonistic pleasurable state of consciousness," which assumes that the feeling by itself affords an adequate criterion of the good."

Either criticism could be correct in some cases. But it is important to note that Quillian's two additional points, as well as the first, are largely irrelevant to the criticism of the evolutionary moralist himself. Again, Quillian is caught in his own limitation of the type of evolutionary ethics which he selects. Even if those points did apply to all of the evolutionary writers that he has chosen to mention, it need not follow that they apply to other evolutionary moralities.

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[47] See ahead to discussion of evolution and its modern theory, pp. 63-64.

Yet, that is not the major relevance of Quillian to our argument here. It is far more important to move to his discussion of what he calls the "crucial point in the Moral Theory of Evolutionary Naturalism" - that is, "the transition from a purely descriptive account of the development of moral phenomena to a normative interpretation of morality."[48] For, Quillian continues correctly, "upon the validity of this transition depends the success of the attempt made by this school of philosophy to develop a non-religious theory of morality."[49] The section entitled "The Transition from Descriptive to Normative Morality" is the pivotal point for his entire argument.

Quillian sets out to show that the transition cannot be made legitimately, and that every such attempt will ultimately fail.

> It will be argued that, in so far as the evolutionary moralist's treatment of ethical questions is naturalistic, it is not normative; and that in so far as normative considerations are introduced, it is no longer merely naturalistic.[50]

He then explains that the fundamental distinction between a descriptive and a normative science is in "the two ways one might look at the world of man's experience". A descriptive science "seeks to describe what something is - it is concerned with the sheer facts of existence. The

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[48] Quillian, p. 78

[49] Ibid., p. 78

[50] Ibid., p. 78

normative science, on the other hand, "is concerned with the importance, the value, or worth of facts."[51] What is and what ought to be, is the difference. Descriptive sciences, biology, zoology, chemistry, etc., says Quillian, deal alone with the is. They deal with the natural or sequential causation while the normative deals with ante-sequential causation. Normative, or ante-sequential, "starts with the idea of the possible", and the end helps to determine the idea and the meaning of the act.

In ethics the important question is: "What is the distinguishing character of that which we judge to be morally good or right?" "Here the predicate 'good' enters as a new notion which is super-added to, and not derived from, the logical or causal relations established by means of description."[52]

Let us pause to note what Professor Quillian has accomplished to this point of his argument. In drawing the distinction between the descriptive and normative sciences, a distinction which has been made before in modern philosophy - certainly since G. E. Moore, he has drawn our attention to a point on which moral philosophers do agree: there is an intellectual activity called Ethics which is the subject matter of moral philosophy. Quillian

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[51]Ibid., p. 79

[52]Ibid., p. 80

begins the circle which shuts out the scientist and parcels out to the evolutionary moralist the "sheer facts of existence", a phrase in itself somewhat demeaning.

The predicate "good", Quillian writes, is then super-added to all that is described by the scientist, as if it were something totally-other, and did not depend on its natural existence and expression. In that case we ask the question directly: From where did it come? It is human ethical behaviour we are talking about, not a philosophical idea of the good as "truth" or "beauty". It is the "good", as it appears in the activity of individual human beings and in the relationships which that individual human has with others. There are serious problems involved when one writes that the good is "super-added" and is not derived from the logical and causal relationships established by descriptive science.

Take, for example, a decision so relatively simple as giving a check for $100 to a local charity. Is the act good? Much as the normative word might apply in deciding that in theory freely-given gifts to local worthwhile charities are good. The motivation, the intent, the availability of funds, the other charities which could also use the money, to say nothing of the feeling of satisfaction the individual gets, or the tax advantage in the gift - these and many more are involved primarily, logically, and causally. They are also part of what Quillian has called the "<u>is</u>".

The "good," as a philosophical ideal to contemplate, is something in which the natural scientist has little ability, and probably less interest. But there are so many other determinants in which the "is" - that which can be described and verified by scientific investigation - determines the "ought." The good is not "super-added," as something from the outside alone. It is a quality which belongs also to the facts and to their logical and causal relationships. The ethical speculation that I "ought" to return an overdue book to the local library, depends first of all exclusively, on the "is" of whether I happen to have borrowed the book in the first place, and whether it is presently overdue, or whether I have a prior obligation to do something else, such as finish my book review.

More directly to our thesis topic: the "good" depends upon the facts of human existence. It would be naïve and logically absurd to analyze a type of behaviour normatively - good or bad - without first discovering the situation in which the act occurs, and the other possibilities which were open to the individual at that time. Abstaining from pre-marital intercourse, e.g., can well be a "good" of human behaviour, provided it is consciously chosen as an act of free will, in personal discipline or communal love and respect. But it can hardly be called an equal good, if abstinence is a result of some abnormal sex pattern in the individual which does

not permit sexual activity in the first place. The type of judgment we make normatively, depends on what the description is.

There is, of course, a point of difference, a way in which each "is" and each "ought" operates separately - both for the convenience of investigation and in the separate categories of knowledge. If in no other way, evolutionary biology and moral philosophy have to remain separate because of the specialization required to master their details. An authority in one, however eminent he is for example as a biologist, does not become an authority in the other. They should look to each other to complement the work. The domains are not inherently separate, and we plead here that they can be seen as two complimentary expressions of the same pursuit.

Quillian consents that a normative science can also be descriptive, and therein reduces some of the weight of our criticism. "Normative science," he says, "purports to give us a true account of matters of fact."[53] "The distinction then, must be sought in the particular aspect of the facts described from each point of view."[54] But Quillian's qualification is too little and too late. He has already drawn the line between the two, and then only allows that the normative can include the descriptive.

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[53] Ibid., p. 80

[54] Ibid.

He no where hints that the descriptive can also include the normative.

After establishing the "fallacy", Dr. Quillian goes on to describe how it fails to account for the origin of moral consciousness. While it is successful in tracing the backgrounds of certain acts to which we now attribute moral value, it does not account for the idea of moral consciousness itself. He notes that "there is no difficulty in explaining naturalistically, the development of natural feelings of sympathy and of concern for others."[55] (That would simply be the duty of the descriptive science alone.) "Social tendencies as well as selfish passions belong to man as part of his natural "inheritance", but as such, they are neither moral nor immoral."

The problem, as Quillian sees it, is that the evolutionary moralist

> . . . after accounting in this fashion for certain natural tendencies which are found in the lower animals and man . . . claims that the actions which are prompted by these tendencies are, in the case of mankind at least, morally good.[56]

It is at this point that the evolutionary moralist moves from the descriptive to the normative role, and according to Quillian, is in error.

> The evolutionist's account explains that man's feelings of right and wrong are the result of the development by natural selection of the simple feelings of pleasure or dissatisfaction which are

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[55]Ibid., p. 82

[56]Ibid., p. 83

> respectively felt when a natural tendency or instinct is obeyed or when an individual is thwarted in following such a tendency.[57]

Our objection here is not so much directed to Quillian's point. The problem we see is that he is refuting only the "straw man" he set up in the first place. If the position of the evolutionary moralist were that which Quillian describes, then we would have to agree; that is, if evolutionary moralists based their interest in ethics only on the feelings of right and wrong which a person has as a result of inherited tendencies from the pre-human animal life, then Quillian's word of criticism would be a propos. But there is more to it than that, a point to which we have referred already and to which we will later return. Professor Waddington, e.g., bases his evolutionary type of ethics not on the inherited feelings of right and wrong, but on the "authority acceptor system" within the human child which "allows him to receive teaching on ethical rights and wrongs."[58]

Quillian writes further of "the genetic fallacy" involved:

> This naturalistic account, locating as it does, the seat of morality in inherited impulses or tendencies and their attendant sensations, fails completely to explain the unique characteristics of the moral consciousness. It misses the significance of the appearance in the human individual of self-consciousness with the consequent judgment of right

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[57] Ibid., p. 83

[58] Cf. pp. 137-148, discussion of evolutionary ethics.

> and wrong and with moral self-determination. The error that has been made is commonly referred to as the "genetic fallacy".[59]

He then argues that the evolutionary moralist is guilty of confusing the origin of a moral ideal or act with its present expression in man. He quotes Edward Caird from The Evolution of Religion, to note that: "to trace a living being back to its beginning, and to explain what follows by such beginning, would be simply to omit almost everything that characterizes it . . ."[60]

The origin of an act or a belief or an ideal, as William James made perfectly clear also in another context, does not account for its present worth and usefulness in man. That, of course, is true. But it does not serve to keep the evolutionary moralist out of discussions on ethics. All that the latter would want to say is that the roots of an act, while not determining the course of the activity itself, are still essential in determining how it came to be the way it is, and what part it played in the development and selection of man. None of the writers, either those covered in the Quillian argument, or of the modern ones, would want to disagree with this phase of Quillian's comments on the origin of ethical acts.

He then enumerates a listing of several specific ways in which the evolutionist fails to account for human

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[59]Ibid., pp. 85-86

[60]Ibid., p. 86

morality, with the continuing intent of banishing the descriptive scientist from ethical reflection and the formulation of ethical concepts. The first of these, and by far the most important is the rational element, for:

> Try as he may, the evolutionist cannot account for the moral consciousness by his naturalistic description, one element in the moral consciousness which cannot be explained by a genetic account and which is of the highest importance is the rational element.[61]

He explains the rational element as the part of human morality which says that ". . . quite apart from feelings, this act ought to be done by any rational creature in this situation".[62] Limited as the evolutionary moralist is by his belief that morality originates in the inherited tendencies to do one thing as against another on the basis of his innate feelings, he cannot account, says Quillian, for this rational element in ethics.

What Quillian does not understand (or if he does, he has not made it clear in this book) is that even this rational element itself; i.e., man as he is thinking, is also the same man who has arisen out of the evolutionary process and the thinking itself - the rational element, from an evolutionary point of view, is also part of what he has received and developed in his natural endowments. Or, more briefly, the thinking man can sometimes be a man

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[61] Ibid., p. 86

[62] Ibid., p. 87

who "thinks" he is thinking. The non-rational origins which affect his behaviour can also affect his thought.

There are also some other facets of moral consciousness which are out with the boundaries of the descriptive moralist which Quillian notes. One is that:

> Along with the rational factor there are other characteristics of the moral consciousness which the naturalistic genetic account fails to cover. It is unable to explain the imperativeness of the moral demands which a moral being recognizes; an imperativeness which cannot have grown from the mechanical necessity of the natural law.[63]

Evolutionary morality also fails to give "a satisfactory explanation of the consciousness of individual responsibility," "the sacrifices far beyond anything demanded by personal attachments;" "the belief that one could have done better," "the sense of guilt," etc.

> Thus it is clear that the evolutionist's formula misses the essence of the moral consciousness which it undertakes to explain because morality involves normative considerations which cannot be reduced to something else by the descriptive method of Evolutionary Naturalism.[64]

It should be made clear that we are not in this thesis defending evolutionary ethics as the only legitimate way to conduct ethical discussion. But both the evolutionary scientist and the moral philosopher are involved in all levels of ethical reflection on the behaviour pattern of man. There is a natural or "non-rational" element involved even where the moral philosopher is

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[63] Ibid., p. 89

[64] Ibid., p. 89

engaged in purely philosophical pursuits. The realm of ethics and what one believes, is normative morality, and cannot be successfully removed from the human situation. The moral philosopher is also a man, involved in the limitations of culture and personality and creaturehood.

Quillian complains that:

> In explaining the moral consciousness he (the evolutionary naturalist) begins at the biological level of instinctive actions and, though various modifying factors are introduced, they too are of the natural order, and so the theory never gets beyond the natural or non-moral level.[65]

But let us examine that conclusion as it applies to a few of the specific factors in ethics which Quillian parceled off for the moral philosopher, and from which he excluded the naturalist. He wrote, for example, of "the rational factor", the "sense of guilt", and "the consciousness of individual responsibility"; as being elements in ethics where the evolutionary moralist is an intruder. But when Darwin discussed the rational factor in human behaviour, he concluded that all of what man is and does, including his rational and moral abilities and behaviour are influenced by his natural origin. Waddington and Huxley have used some of the psychological studies, especially though not exclusively, Freud to help them to explain the very things which Quillian writes about: the sense of guilt, moral consciousness, etc. In short, though we cover it later

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[65] Ibid., p. 86

in this thesis, they expand their interest far beyond Professor Quillian's belief that they depend on the inherited tendencies towards certain kinds of activity which in man are "good or evil." How a person comes to feel about what his responsibility is, and how universal is the imperative within his rational thought, and everything else about his ethical reflection and behaviour, is subject to empirical investigation. The descriptive account is more than the matter on which the normative scientist works; it is an integral part of the reflection itself.

Quillian also argues that while the evolutionary moralist recognizes that man sometimes has a sense of obligation, he misses the fact of obligation itself. He writes:

> Obligation, then is seen to be not a product of natural feelings, but a result of man's reflection upon his relations to his fellows and his insight into the purposive order of his own life, into the teleological structure of his own personality.[66]

In all of this, and the source of another of our objections to Dr. Quillian's argument, is that he does not seem to understand that the evolutionary moralist can view man as more than an animal.

> He (the evolutionary moralist) considers human beings and all that is characteristic of them as being no other than objects about which he may gradually acquire information.[67]

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[66] Ibid., p. 96

[67] Ibid., p. 99

That statement is unfortunate. When Professor Thorpe wrote of the "unitary foundation underlying all experience - scientific, artistic, and religious," he was writing from an evolutionary point of view. Man, as Polanyi shows, is also the subject of this experience and experimentation. Without the subject, without the man who in experiencing becomes part of the experience, and thus interpreting the universe as a participant and not as an observer, there would be no thought nor moral philosophy.

Quillian's argument against a determinism in human behaviour is essentially correct; but there is a naïvete' about his handling of the topic which highlights our point here. He writes that to the evolutionary moralist, a dog stealing a piece of raw meat and a man stealing a cooling pie from the window sill, are based on "essentially similar considerations."

> However writes Quillian the man's reaction to the circumstances of hunger and presented food would depend, not simply upon his inherited tendencies, as would the dog's reaction, but also upon his conception of himself as a moral agent with conscious ends and values to be realized.[68]

There are two basic problems in that quotation. For one thing, it shows again how Quillian is unable to understand that one who believes in the natural causes of human behaviour, can also believe in the moral nature of man. For another, it also shows a basic misunderstanding of

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[68] Ibid., p. 98

the way instinct works, even in animals themselves. Although he wrote formerly of the importance of seeing man as a part of the natural process, here he denies the basic continuity of man with the process. Even with pre-human animals, and more especially in an organism so complex as a dog, instinct does not operate alone to produce behaviour. Professor Thorpe has made this clear in his classic study, Learning and Instinct in Animals.

Quillian concludes:

> A man's character, then, is not simply the sum total of his inherited impulses; it is a particular organization of these natural functions in accordance with a dominating purpose or end.[69]

Therein is an important issue, the one on which hinges the non-natural origin of human morality. But, even here we note that "the dominating purpose or end" also has a non-rational element in its origin.

Later in the book, Quillian sets forth "The Metaphysical Foundations of Normative Morality".[70] In the first place . . . man belongs to nature. As an animal, he is "a product of the natural process". But, "man possesses important characteristics and capacities which are not found in the lower animals".

> Man differs from other living beings in that in him we find reason and self-consciousness and self-determination . . . he is a being who, while rooted in

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[69]Ibid., p. 96

[70]Ibid., pp. 119 ff.

> the natural process, stands in a measure above it and is able to direct it to his chosen ends . . . and (he is) capable of at least temporarily suspending or arresting the flux of the instinctive life.[71]

"Only such an understanding of man can make sense of the moral life."[72]

With that we agree, as would the outstanding proponents of the evolutionary ethic. But we dissent when Quillian assumes that there is no natural element to those "more-than-natural" moral acts. What we must say about man, we must also say about his morality: along with his supra-natural destination and importance, there is also a natural origin within the whole creative process. The two cannot artifically be separated, but must be understood as two parts of the same phenomenon - "The Phenomenon of Man."

> Those who adopt the spiritual explanation are right when they defend so vehemently a certain transcendence of man over the rest of nature. But neither are the materialists wrong when they maintain that man is just one further term in a series of animal forms.[73]

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[71]Ibid., p. 120

[72]Ibid.

[73]Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Phenomenon of Man (London: Collins, 1959), p. 188

II. The Life Sciences and Ethics

II. THE LIFE SCIENCES AND ETHICS

In The Nature of Life Professor C. H. Waddington suggests that the most characteristic feature of biology and its point of greatest difference from chemistry and physics is that it "deals with entities which must be envisaged simultaneously on four different time scales."[1]

> Not only must we study the hour-to-hour or minute-to-minute operations of living things as going concerns, but we cannot leave out of account the slower processes, occurring in a period of time comparable to a lifetime . . . On a longer time-scale again, there are phenomena which must be measured in terms of a small number of lifetimes; they are the processes of heredity, by which characteristics of organisms are passed on from parent to offspring. Finally, on the time-scale of many hundreds of generations, there are the slow processes of evolution, by which the character of the individuals in a given population may become split up into two or more different species.[2]

All four are related to this thesis, in reverse order: There are points at which we must begin with the "slow processes of evolution, in the time-scale of many hundreds of generations," in the area of what evolution has to do with ethics. From evolution, continuing up

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[1] C. H. Waddington, The Nature of Life (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1961; third edition, Unwin Books Paperback, 1963), pp. 26, 51, 97, etc.

[2] We should also note that Professor Thorpe in Science, Man and Morals draws the exact division, in many cases using the exact same words.

Waddington's time-scale, we come to the hereditary process - "the measure of a small number of lifetimes", and the contribution of the geneticist in particular. It is necessary to examine the genetical inheritance of the individual person in the formation of his individual ethical life, to see whether man's ethical ideas and activities are affected by the "requirements" of his genetic make-up. G. Rattray Taylor recently noted that: "The most serious of all human problems created by biological research: (is) man's immanent power to interfere with the processes of heredity".[3] Eugenics is an old, but increasingly serious ethical problem which must be faced directly.

Finally, we will refer to the biological setting of the day-by-day, and minute-by-minute development of ethics with particular individuals. Temperament and character, "the operation of the living thing" as we have long realized, are obviously affected by the non-rational biological and physiological processes within the body, both during the lifetime of the particular organism, and at any given moment within that life. In some ways that we will mention later, these appear to set the limits of the ethical response which a given individual may reach. Biological factors influence ethics on all four divisions of Waddington's time-scale.

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[3]Taylor Biological Time-Bomb, p. 158

A. Evolution and Ethics

1. The Acceptance of Evolution

This paper will not argue the validity of the evidence in favour of evolution. As a general explanation for the development of human life, the process of evolution is accepted. The acceptance does not seem the least irresponsible for as David Lack wrote in his article on "Natural Selection and Human Nature"; "Evolution, that is the production of new forms of animals or plants from pre-existing forms, is today accepted as a fact, including the origin of man from ape-like ancestors."[4]

In the past there has been much religious controversy over Darwin and Evolution.[5] Some Christian communities still object to the findings of evolutionary biology regarding the origin of man and his behaviour. Care must be taken in dealing with these objections where they are based on a concern for truth, and not simply a refusal to examine the evidence. It was 1967 before the Tennessee "monkey law," which prohibited the teaching of evolution

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[4]David A. Lack, in Biology and Personality, edited by Ian Ramsey, p. 40

[5]Although A. Ellegard and John Kent (From Darwin to Blanchford), p. 7, have recently made it quite clear that the general theory of evolution was accepted among the educated, including the churchmen, as early as 1870.

in the state's public schools, was finally repealed.[6] Tennessee is the state in which the infamous Scopes trial took place in 1925, when public school teacher John T. Scopes was convicted because he taught evolution to his students. Clarence Darrow lost the case for his defense and the world laughed out loud at Tennessee justice. The law remained for over forty years more. In the autumn of 1968, the anti-evolutionary law in neighboring Arkansas, although supported in the state courts, was finally overruled by the United States Supreme Court.[7] More recently three New York nuns were fired by the Pastor of the parish of St. Mary of the Assumption, because they taught evolution in the Staten Island parochial school.[8] Incidentally, at the turn of 1970, it was still illegal to teach Darwinism in the state of Mississippi.

As Professor Lack again writes, this time in his own book on evolution: Evolutionary Theory and Christian Belief:

> Even today, a few Christians seem to consider it their duty to imply that serious doubt still exists, sometimes supporting this suggestion by quoting out of context an over-cautious statement by a biologist, perhaps as reported in the daily press. So let it be

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[6] The Scientific American, July, 1967, p. 42, where another school teacher was fired prior to the repeal, "apparently by coincidence - for teaching evolution." Local school boards control the content and quality of teachers and curriculum, so this is not to say the archaic opinion is representative of the entire state.

[7] United Press Release, Pittsburgh Press, January 7, 1969, pp. 1 and 7. Cf. "The End of the Monkey War," by L. Sprague de Camp, in Scientific American, February, 1969, vol. 220, #2, pp. 15 ff.

[8] The National Observer, October 21, 1968, p. 6

> stated categorically that the evidence for the occurrence of animal evolution is overwhelming and that all serious students accept it.[9]

No longer can we base our Christian concept on the uniqueness of man in an extra-evolutionary physical creation of Homo Sapiens. Man belongs to the same life line which supports the rest of the animal world. The overwhelming evidence amassed in the century since publication of Darwin's Origin of the Species, in 1859, is so convincing that no man can reasonably deny it, either because it is unbiblical, unreasonable, or unproven. Everything we know confirms the fact of evolution. "The general position of man within the animal kingdom, within the vertebrate sub-phylum, and within the mammalian class, is absolutely established and beyond any doubt."[10]

In fact, a further, and prior, issue is now being settled. Soon the same categorical statement will have to be made regarding the relationship of "living" and "non-living". W. H. Thorpe writes:

> As biological knowledge has accumulated, so has the meaning of the ordinary English words "life" and "living" become more and more indefinite. Some at least of the features which are usually regarded as characteristic of life are now detectable in many entities which, at first sight, we should certainly not have thought of as living organisms.[11]

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[9]David A. Lack, Evolutionary Theory and Christian Belief (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1957), p. 23

[10]George Gaylord Simpson, The Meaning of Evolution (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 282

[11]Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, p. 1

Further, Professor A. R. Peacock also writes:

> The investigation . . . served to show that there is no unbridgeable gulf between living and non-living matter. There is in principle no gap to be filled.[12]

Teilhard de Chardin explains the "stuff of the universe" as evolving from "Pre-Life to Life to Thought", the last depending on the first wherein was the potential for everything which was to follow. Again, Bishop (then Professor at Oxford) Ian Ramsey wrote in his introduction to Biology and Personality, "already it seems clear that there is in principle no ultimate gap between living and non-living matter, and

> . . . that the possibility of matter being organized in the forms we call "living" was logically implicit in the molecular properties of all matter from the start. What then is distinctive about human personality except its particular complex molecular organization?[13]

We can speculate, on the basis of the scientific experiment and the hypothesis so far advanced, that the same primeval gas of fundamental particles which encircled the earth when darkness was upon the face of the deep - long before anything or anybody breathed life - and the mind of modern man which now tries to fathom the depths of that emptiness and the origin of that "life", are of one and the same substance.

The importance of evolution to the Christian understanding of man is acknowledged by many theologians in the

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[12]A. R. Peacock, Biology and Personality, ed. Ian Ramsey, p. 35

[13]Ian T. Ramsey, ibid., p. 1

modern world, but it is important to note a continuing reservation regarding it by the Roman Catholic Church. The official statement now leaves some room for the study of the possibility of evolution; but it is doubtful that the "room" is actually intended to include accepting the implications of the natural origin of man in our theology and ethics. It was not so open that Teilhard de Chardin was given permission to publish during his lifetime. In the most recent papal statement concerning it - in July of 1966 - Pope Paul VI addressed a group of theologians on the topic of evolution. He did "commend the attempts of the theologians to be in touch with science";[14] but he also stressed the limits which "ought not to be imprudently overstepped". Authors who start from the assumption - "which is anything but firmly proved", that the human race is descended "not from a single pair of progenitors, but from several progenitors", were warned that the Church "is the supreme norm of truth for all the faithful".[15]

In 1941 Pope Pius XII, in an address to the Pontifical Academy of Science, altered it slightly to mention "the essential superiority of man" over the rest of creation, by reason of his soul. He also reiterated the derivation of the first woman from Adam; and the

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[14]"Original Sin and Evolution", The Tablet (July 23, 1966) Vol. 220, No. 6583, pp. 851, 852

[15]Ibid., p. 851

"impossibility that the father and progenitor of a man could be other than a human being". And, in 1948, Cardinal Suhard, Archbishop of Paris, upheld a 1909 decree in Acta Apostolicae Sedes, and shortly thereafter came Humani Generis in 1950.

If by progress we mean movement in the direction of accepting evolution and the evolutionary origin of man, Humani Generis is somewhat progressive. There we read of the "fictitious tenets of evolution", which repudiate all that is absolute and firm and immutable: The Magisterium of the Church does not forbid that the theory of evolution . . . be investigated",[16] but the Catholic faith obliges us to hold that the "human soul is immediately created by God". The "greatest reserve and caution" is demanded in this controversy.[17]

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[16]Father A. C. Cotter, S.J., The Encyclical "Human Generis", With a Commentary (Massachusetts: Weston College Press, 1951), p. 41

[17]There is no disrespect intended here to the Roman Catholic Church. In fact the literature which deals with Roman Catholics and evolution is extensive and interesting. In the interest of ecumenical studies and discussions, however, we need first to know the exact position which is taken by the official Church spokesmen. I am indebted to Father John Russell of Heythrop College, Oxford, for his kind assistance in pointing out some of the more recent and relevant material. J. Franklin Ewing gives a careful, if conservative, summary of "Current Roman Catholic Thought on Evolution", which is part of Volume III, of Sol Tax's monumental edition of Evolution After Darwin (University of Chicago Press, 1960). Ewing writes for a large group of Roman Catholic theologians who are attempting to work out the implications of evolution. Fothergill, in Evolution and Christians, gives an admirable discussion of the topic from the point of view of a Roman Catholic biologist. John Russell himself published a clear concise article on

Since the work of Teilhard has been praised throughout the world, and others of more local interest have attempted to follow the implications of what evolution can mean to the Christian faith; scholars such as John Russell and Maurice Flick in Great Britain, as well as Gleason and Ewing in the United States, have been careful to stress that the transformation from pre-man to man cannot be of causes purely immanent, but they have also accepted the biological origin of man in the evolutionary process. Flick concluded:

> Even if science one day abandoned evolutionism as the explanation of the origin of living species, it would still be a gain for our understanding of the faith if we realized that dogma does not necessarily exclude such a theory, whatever may be its intrinsic value.[18]

"Evolution and Theology" in The Tablet, September 16, 1967. Father A. C. Cotter's book on Humani Generis With Commentary, mentioned above, is fair and helpful. Father Walter G. Ong's Darwinism and Christian Perspectives, with its introduction by Pittsburgh Bishop John J. Wright (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), is expressive of a wide range of Roman Catholic opinion. Father Maurice Flick's two articles "Original Sin and Evolution" in The Tablet, September 10th and 17th, 1966, are comprehensive and indicative of the changing theological opinion in the direction of maintaining the spirituality of man in his evolutionary setting. In addition to the rather cautious conservatism of the Roman Catholic official comment, there are many priests and scholars who are trying to work out the implications of what an evolution "which could possibly be true, so long as it follows the rules set down" could mean to their theology and to the life of the Christian people in the Church and the world.

[18]Maurice Flick, "Original Sin and Evolution", The Tablet (September 10, 1966), p. 1009

There are different approaches to the study of evolution which go beyond the "natural" explanation. M. Polanyi insists that an "ordering principle" is essential to an understanding of evolution.[19] Teilhard proposes what we could almost call a Christocentric view of the evolutionary process.[20] Sir Alister Hardy's Gifford Lectures plead for an awareness of the religious presence in natural history.[21] Theodosius Dobzhansky concludes with his Teilhardian Synthesis in The Biology of Ultimate Concern,[22] and H. Graham Cannon argues that the evolutionary movement is more than accidental and non-purposive. Neo-Darwinians, he says, have overlooked that "great something" which directs the process to its purpose and destination.[23] These, and others, are important to the interest which a Christian student has in biological evolution. But each becomes relevant as it begins with the acceptance of the evolutionary origin of life and man.

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[19]M. Polanyi, Personal Knowledge (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), esp. chap. 13, "The Rise of Man"

[20]Teilhard, Phenomenon of Man

[21]Sir Alister Hardy, The Living Stream & The Divine Flame (London: Collins, vol. 1, 1965; vol. 2, 1966)

[22]Theodosius Dobzhansky, The Biology of Ultimate Concern (New York: The New American Library, 1967)

[23]H. Graham Cannon, The Evolution of Living Things & Lamarck and Modern Genetics (Manchester University Press, 1958, 1959), esp. Evolution of Living Things, pp. 118-119

> There is the theory of evolution and there are theories of evolution. The theory of evolution is the fact - it may surely be called that in the vernacular - that all organisms that now live or ever lived, all they are and all they do, are the outcome of genetic descent and modification from a remote, simple, unified beginning.[24]

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[24] Anna Roe, Behaviour and Evolution (ed. Roe and G. G. Simpson) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), p. 17

2. Evolutionary Theory - A Brief Account

The idea of evolution did not originate with Charles Darwin, and The Origin of the Species was not the first book to discuss it. The ancient Greek philosophers speculated on it. It is also found in the Vedas, which date back to 2000 B.C.[25] A great many others from that time to 1859,[26] offered some vague and general form of evolution to account for the world and its living things; notably Darwin's own grandfather, Erasmus Darwin who published Zoonomia before Charles was born; and Darwin's "most important rival", French biologist Lamarck, who presented a "fully worked-out theory of evolution" as early as 1809, a full fifty years before the Origin,[27] prepared the way.

But it is Darwin to whom we look for the foundation stone of our modern theory. Much like Freud, and the

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[25]Swani Nikhilananda, "Hinduism and the Idea of Evolution", in A Book that Shook the World, ed. Ralph Buchsbaum (University of Pittsburgh Press, 3rd printing, 1968), pp. 48-49

[26]See esp. Bentley Glass et al, Forerunners of Darwin - 1745-1859 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1959); Basil Willey, Darwin and Butler: Two Versions of Evolution (London: Chatto and Windus, 1960); Lecture II, pp. 32-59; and Gerhard Wichler, Charles Darwin (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1961), Part I, pp. 1-78

[27]S. A. Barnett, A Century of Darwin (London: Heinemann's Paperback, 1962), esp. article by C. H. Waddington

latter's "discovery" of the unconscious,[28] Darwin was the first to demonstrate that evolutionary theory could be tested in independent experiments by others.

The key to that demonstration was what Darwin called "natural selection". The theory of evolution is that "living things do not remain unchangeably the same from generation to generation, but gradually alter in character until they eventually become significantly different from their early ancestors".[29] Natural selection holds that living things change as certain aspects or abilities are favoured in the selective process of nature. The "fittest" will survive. Recent advances only confirm the idea of natural selection, so much so that it has been called "the main unifying idea of biology".[30]

Who, in fact the fittest are, and what has in fact been favoured, is a subject which has consumed the interest of Darwinians through the years. There are various interpretations of Darwin at this point. Some wrongly believed fitness to be a matter of physical strength. Others, equally incorrect, have over-emphasized the qualities of social cooperation - "togetherness", they say, works in nature.

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[28]L. L. Whyte, The Unconscious Before Freud (London: Tavistock Publications, 1959)

[29]Waddington, Chapter 1, A Century of Darwin, ed. Barnett, p. 1

[30]J. Maynard Smith, A Theory of Evolution (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, reprint, 1962), p. 11

While both of these extremes belong somewhere in our discussion, they do not touch on the simple fact that "fittest", to Darwin, means nothing more gladiatorial and nothing more glamourous than the ability to reproduce successfully in relation to other members of the same species. Since so many individuals of any group will die in infancy, and since so many others will fall prey to predators and the elements of nature; it is the parent with the most offspring who themselves live to reproduce, that is "selected" and declared "the fittest", by natural selection. "The word fitness, then", writes Medawar, "has come to mean net reproductive advantage."[31] Students of heredity do not deliberately use it in any other sense.

There is a possible confusion at this point, which was pointed out to me by Dr. H. Cecil MacGregor at the University of St. Andrews, regarding the matter of "numbers of offspring". It is not the number of births alone. As a matter of fact, the usual single birth of humans has played an important part in man's evolutionary progress. S. A. Barnett explained in Instinct and Intelligence, that a lengthy childhood is an essential feature of man . . .Our propensity for teaching the young is unparalleled.[32] The single infant birth helps to insure

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[31]Sir Peter Medawar, The Future of Man (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1960), p. 28

[32]S. A. Barnett, Instinct and Intelligence: The Science of Behaviour in Animals and Men (London: Macgibbon and Key, 1967), p. 220

that he will receive extended care during the first few months of life, a period which we increasingly realize is important to the formation of his personality, to say nothing of the protection necessary for the very survival of his life.

Fitness means the survival of offspring who live to reproduce, in relation to others of the same species. It could be that the stronger is the male who eventually mates with the female, but this need not be the case, and cannot be said to be the dominant factor in selection.

Dobzhansky explains in Mankind Evolving:

> "Natural" in "natural selection" does not mean savagery or conditions preceding or excluding man-made changes in the environment . . . Who is the "fittest" in the evolutionary survival of the fittest, is a most complex matter which has not been fully clarified even yet. One thing which is clear is that the fittest is not necessarily a romantic figure, or a victorious conquerer, or a superman. He is most likely to be merely a prolific parent.[33]

Or, as Paul Ramsey quotes with agreement:

> The fittest, in the evolutionary sense is nothing more spectacular than the quiet, often unobtrusive fellow who, rather than spend his time in combat, produces, feeds, and teaches a large family of children.[34]

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[33]Theodosius Dobzhansky, Mankind Evolving (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962)

[34]Hampton L. Carson, Heredity and Human Life (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 137 Quoted by Paul Ramsey in Genetics and the Future of Man, ed. John D. Roslansky (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Co., 1966), p. 114

There, in ridiculous brevity, was Darwin's contribution: The most fit in any given species, are usually the most prolific! "Fitness is the ability to contribute to the gene pool of the next generation."[35] The attributes of some particular parents will be passed on to the next generation. Other attributes, from individuals without surviving progeny, will not. A "natural" selection will have been made.

One of the clearest explanations of Darwin's theory is found in J. Maynard Smith's Theory of Evolution. After reviewing the setting in which natural selection was conceived, noting that Darwin was indebted to the science of his day, Smith begins:

> His (Darwin's) theory of natural selection starts from the observation that in optimal conditions . . . all animal and plant species are capable of increasing in numbers in each generation.[36]

But, since they do not in fact increase indefinitely:

> It follows either that not all individuals born survive to sexual maturity, or that some sexually mature individuals produce fewer offspring than they would under optimal conditions.[37]

Taking an acknowledged clue from Malthus, Darwin concluded that animals and plants, as well as human animals, tend to level off their numbers in proportion to the available food and other limitations.

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[35]Ernst Mayr, "Accident or Design: The Paradox of Evolution", in The Evolution of Living Organisms, ed. G.W. Leeper (Melbourne: University Press, 1962), p. 2

[36]Maynard Smith, Evolution, p. 33

[37]Ibid., pp. 33-34

Starting here, says Smith, we introduce another observation. It is obvious to the observer that not all individuals in a species are alike. This applies, as we note each time we recognize another person, to human beings; but to the trained observer it applies to animals, plants, and even insects, as well. So, continues Smith:

> . . . some of the differences between them will affect their chances of survival and their fertility. Some individuals will be better than others at catching food or escaping from predators, at finding mates, or raising their offspring.[38]

Those better fitted to survive in these areas are "chosen" as parents of the next generation.

Children, or offspring, tend to resemble their parents, and it follows that: "The better adapted individuals in each generation . . . will tend to transmit to their progeny those characters by virtue of which they are adapted."[39] Thus, by the combined processes of natural selection and inheritance, "the adaptation of the population to its environment is constantly perfected, or is constantly adjusted to a changing environment."[40] Natural selection works on the inherited differences within the population. Darwin was not far wrong as far as he went.

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[38]Ibid., p. 34

[39]Ibid., p. 34

[40]Ibid., p. 34

But, he did not go far enough. There was a major gap from the beginning. As Dobzhansky writes: "The lack of understanding of the sources of heritable variation was the Archilles-heel of Darwin's theory."[41] The weakness and the gap had to do with what is inherited. Granting that natural selection will cause changes of some kind, "can we be sure that these changes will be adequate to account for the evolutionary alterations which would be necessary to convert one species into another?"[42] The answer, continues Waddington:

> . . . must obviously depend on the kinds of hereditary variation which occur in natural populations and are thus offered as raw materials for natural selection to work on.[43]

From what we know now, Darwin did not fully understand heredity nor the variations which it brings forth. When the theory of natural selection was first put forward, "by far the vaguest element in its composition was the principle of inheritance."[44] And, although Darwin was probably at times dissatisfied with it, by and large he accepted the Lamarckian theory of the "inheritance of acquired characteristics."[45]

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[41] Dobzhansky, "Evolution and Environment," vol. 1, Evolution After Darwin

[42] Waddington, Century of Darwin, p. 6

[43] Ibid.

[44] R. A. Fisher, The Genetical Theory of Natural Selection (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p. vi

[45] Fisher, "Difficulties Felt by Darwin," in Genetical Theory of Natural Selection, pp. 5 ff.

Lamarck had suggested that "the conditions under which an organism lives produce in it effects which are inherited". His theory started boldly with the belief that animals, through what he called "an exertion of the will", choose to live their lives in a certain way. By choosing to use, or choosing not to use a particular organ, for example the use of certain muscles or eyesight, the individual could increase or decrease the effectiveness of that particular organ.

The concept of the "will" is a difficult concept for a biologist, even though the increased effectiveness of various organs and attributes is obvious. The trouble with Lamarck's theory was that he took the "acquired characteristic", i.e., the improved muscle or developed eyesight, and passed it somehow through the reproductive cells, so that it could then be inherited by the offspring of the generation which acquired it in the first place. That is to say: If I as a parent am careless with my eyes during the course of my lifetime, my deficiency could then be passed on genetically to my children. Eyesight is an incidental choice of example, serious though deficient eyesight is. Far more often do we tend to attribute matters of conduct and character to the mistake of the parent, even as much as the Pharisees queried when the beggar's sight was restored by Christ, "Who sinned, this man or his father?"

Although there is no known way that a strictly Lamarckian type of inheritance can take place, it is obvious to the careful observer that a type of Lamarckian situation often seems to occur. Professor Thorpe, e.g., reports an experiment on the fruit-fly Drosophilia, where modifications of behaviour showed a Lamarckian type of result.[46] And, says Thorpe, discussions of Lamarck usually miss the point that "all characters of all organisms are to some extent acquired in the environment . . . (and) similarly, all characters are to some extent inherited since an organism cannot form any structure for which it does not have the hereditary potentiality.[47]

Sir Julian Huxley agrees in Essays of a Humanist:

> We know now that apparently Lamarckian results may be obtained in a non-Lamarckian way, by what Waddington calls Genetic Assimilation. With characters which in normal stock are only produced by special environmental stimuli, selection of those individuals showing the character in extreme form may in a comparatively few generations, lead to the character appearing in a few individuals without exposure to the special stimulus.[48]

There is more to learn from Lamarck. Fothergill writes:

> Lamarck died in 1829 . . . As a biologist he stands as one of the greatest men of his time; his contributions to systematic zoology alone entitle him to the greatest respect. He was the real founder of evolutionary theory, and by his theory

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[46]Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, p. 16

[47]Ibid.

[48]Sir Julian Huxley, Essays of a Humanist (London: Chatto and Windus, 1964), p. 29

> of the inheritance of acquired characters he founded a school which will long have its adherents.[49]

Fothergill, it seems to us, is too close to the possibility of Lamarckian inheritance, but he does supply a fitting testimony to the place of the master French biologist in the history of biology.

Aside from Russian biologist Lysenko, who tried to couple good Lamarckian results with good Soviet-Russian social theory; one of Lamarck's most sympathetic students today is Professor H. Graham Cannon at the University of Manchester. In two books,[50] he argues for a renewed study of Lamarck's writings. But Cannon's main argument has to do with other aspects of Lamarckian biology than the inheritance of acquired characters. He does not argue for a restoration of the inheritance of Lamarckianism. He mainly points to what we have missed or misinterpreted in Lamarck. G. G. Simpson also gives fair treatment to Lamarck in This View of Life.[51] But, concludes Simpson: "the only trouble with neo-Lamarckianism, in any of its various seductive guises, is that it is not true."[52]

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[49] Philip G. Fothergill, Evolution and Christians (London: Longmans, 1961), p. 33

[50] H. Graham Cannon, The Evolution of Living Things (Manchester University Press, 1958) and Lamarck and Modern Genetics (Manchester University Press, 1959)

[51] G. G. Simpson, This View of Life: The World of an Evolutionist (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., First Edition, 1947; Second 1964), p. 17

[52] Ibid.

Darwin understood that, in part. He seemed to have realized that if hereditary potential can be altered during the lifetime of the individual parent, there can be no guarantee that it will last any longer than one generation; during which another acquired characteristic could easily replace it, and any lasting value or lack of it, would be lost in the next generation.

> The effectiveness of natural selection in improving the adaptation of a population to its environment depends on how far the differences between individuals which are responsible for their success or failure in the struggle for existence are inherited by their offspring.[53]

There remains another problem. In the main, Darwin accepted the theory of inheritance which was prevalent in his day; not only, as we have already mentioned, in the inheritance of acquired characteristics, but also in that he probably also believed - wrongly - that the hereditary qualities of each parent blended together in the child, co-determining, fifty-fifty, what particular qualities the offspring would have. But if that were true, characteristics would soon converge, as the blending process would bring them all closer together and eliminate the distinctiveness of those which work for the improvement of the species. There had to be some way in which hereditary gains of the "new parents" could be passed along to their posterity.

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[53] Maynard Smith, Theory of Evolution, p. 42

That way was discovered by Gregor Mendel,[54] whose original research took place in no more scientific a place than the back garden of his Augustinian Monastery at Brünn in Moravia, where he raised ordinary garden peas. But, Mendel was no ordinary gardener. Although he had previously been unsuccessful in his examinations in Natural History,[55] he succeeded in experiment where others had long failed in theory. By cross-breeding different varieties of peas, he found that the first generation always resembled one parent or the other - never both. There was no blending of characteristics. One character was always dominant over the other. "Tall plants crossed with short gave only tall. Round-seeded plants crossed with wrinkled ones, gave only round."[56]

In the second generation he found that the recessive characters of the first parents reappeared - and hence were carried unnoticed for a whole generation, in exactly one-fourth to three-fourths proportions. . . . Seven thousand plant countings later, he discovered that the proportions held true![57]

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[54]Cf. Hugo Iltis, Life of Mendel (German ed., 1924; New York: Hafner Publishing Company; English ed., 1966)

[55]C. D. Darlington, Genetics and Man (Pelican Books, 1966), p. 90

[56]Ibid., p. 92

[57]J. Maynard Smith in Theory of Evolution, reported that "People seem to be divided rather sharply into those who find Mendelian genetics easy, and those who find it incomprehensible." p. 12

His paper reporting this research,[58] published in 1865, was absolutely ignored. Nobody that we know of saw its importance then. Although it could have been available to Darwin and the early evolutionists, it was not "discovered" until 1900, when Bateson in England, Correns at Tübingen, and Tschermark in Vienna,[59] found it at about the same time. Then, as Waddington comments: "Within a few decades after 1900, biologists gained a thorough understanding of the mechanisms by which hereditary qualities are passed from generation to generation."[60] It is the combination and recombination of heritable qualities (genes) which allows for the possibility of immediate and permanent change. It is in light of this knowledge that Darwinism can now be expressed as a "genetical theory of natural selection" - by favouring the "fittest" to reproduce, it brings about changes in the hereditary qualities, the genes, of the species.

Once the "permanence" of natural selection is assured, and Mendel corrects both Lamarck and Darwin, we must note finally the post-Darwinian understanding of the "origin of new variations". This is the final piece left in the puzzle of heredity. New variations do certainly

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[58]"Verüsche über Pflanzen Hybriden", English translation in Bateson's Mendel's Principles of Heredity (Cambridge: University Press, 1909, Part II, "Experiments in Plant Hybridisation")

[59]Cf. Darlington, Genetics and Man

[60]Waddington, A Century of Darwin, p. 9

arise; for "evolutionary changes would soon cease if it were not that processes also occur whereby individuals with new, genetically determined characteristics may arise."[61] A full theory of evolution must contain some account of "the initiation of heritable novelty."[62]

We cannot take space here to summarize how this occurs in detail. For our purposes it may be sufficient to say that "newness" does occur in the evolutionary process for causes which for the most part are presently unknown. We can discuss "the origin of new variations"[63] under three headings of (1) segregation, (2) linkage, free and potential variability, and (3) gene mutation. The first has to do with the selection which takes place at different times for different purposes, and thus a variety of "selected qualities." By combining the already existing potentials in different combinations, a wide range of variation is assured.

"Linkage, free and potential variability," is a more complex and technical topic. As a consequence of "genetic linkage," e.g., a selection which takes place for one particular characteristic, may carry with it, unrelated but predictable "side effects." "A genetic change at a single locus may affect more than one

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[61] Smith, Theory of Evolution, p. 103

[62] R. A. Fisher, Genetical Theory of Natural Selection (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p. 12

[63] Smith, Theory of Evolution, pp. 103-120

character."[64] A characteristic which has no known advantage in the process of selection, can be carried with one which does.

The third source of variation, gene mutation, is the best known, but often misunderstood. Mutations obviously occur:

> Normally, genes are reproduced, or are copied exactly at cell division. But occasionally, either as a consequence of mis-copying during reproduction, or a change during the period between cell division, a gene is changed in its chemical structure and in its effects during development. Such a changed, or mutated, gene is subsequently reproduced in its altered form as accurately as was the original one.[65]

Usually the causes of mutations are not definitely known. R. A. Fisher wrote only so general a comment as that "we cannot but ascribe them either to the nature of the organism, or to that of its surrounding environment, or, more generally, to the interaction of the two."[66]

We do not know much more than Fisher did. What modern biology does seem to know is that gene mutation is rare,[67] often harmful,[68] apparently without purpose; and

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[64] Ibid., p. 108

[65] Smith, Theory of Evolution, p. 110

[66] Fisher, Genetical Theory of Natural Selection, p. 13

[67] "Rare" is of course always a relative word. Its range of use among the sources used in this paper, is from one in 50,000 (Smith) p. 113; to one in 500,000 in deBeer (Evolution), p. 15)

[68] Dr. H. C. MacGregor warned me that there is no objective way to support the statement that mutations are "Harmful" - much as most scientists would agree that they usually cause "harm." He referred me to a recent research

consequently is not the controlling factor in evolutionary development. "Most mutations," concludes Simpson, "are harmful. The few that may become useful are, as a rule, slowly adjusted into the existing genetic system of the species."[69]

There is often some difference in emphasis in the way the biologist deals with mutation. But:

> It is probably safe for a student of evolution to assume that mutation is random in the sense that the phenotypic changes produced by mutations are not adaptive to the conditions which caused them, and are just as likely to be in the opposite direction to any evolutionary changes which may be occurring as they are in the same direction.[70]

In answer to his own question: "What controls the emergence of evolutionary novelties?", Professor Ernst Mayr answers:

> Changes of evolutionary significance are rarely . . . the direct result of mutation. . . . The emergence of a new structure is normally due to the acquisition of a new function by an existing structure. In both cases the resulting "new" structure is merely a modification of a previous structure.[71]

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project which may in the end show that some organisms "mutate on purpose," with highly desirable results to their own survival. Dr. MacGregor's own research and opinion are not given as confirmation of one side or the other, but it is an interesting debate which is still open and one which might be critically important to a complete understanding of evolution and the development of species characteristics. I am grateful to Dr. MacGregor.

[69] Simpson, This View of Life, p. 273

[70] Smith, Theory of Evolution, p. 114

[71] Ernst Mayr, "The Emergence of Evolutionary Novelty" in Evolution After Darwin, Vol. 1, ed. Sol Tax, p. 377

"It is natural selection, not mutation," concludes deBeer, "that has governed the direction as well as the amount of evolution."[72] Without mutation at all, there is variation enough in the genetic pools of the plant and animal kingdoms "for evolution to continue for as long in the future as it has gone on in the past."[73]

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In concluding this resume of the contemporary understanding of evolution, we must mention one further point which has to do with the general use of the word "evolution." There is a widespread use of the word which is intended to cover the whole of the evolutionary development, both before the appearance of life, and after the appearance of man. When Julian Huxley or C. H. Waddington or Teilhard use the word "evolution," they are speaking about a category which includes what we would more normally call the cultural development of mankind. When Huxley uses "psycho-social evolution," and when Waddington uses "socio-genetic transmission," and when Teilhard uses his concept of "noösphere," they are actually referring to the development of man as man. But this development is so closely related to the evolution of both pre-life and life, that our concept of evolution must be extended to include the movement of man in his development.

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[72] deBeer, Evolution, p. 16

[73] Ibid., p.

This distinction, and definition, will become increasingly important as we discuss modern expressions of the evolutionary ethic, particularly in the work of Julian Huxley and Professor Waddington.

3. Man in the Evolutionary Process

In his Preface to the Phenomenon, Teilhard de Chardin writes that we should accept two basic assumptions about man and his existence. The first is what he calls "The Organic Nature of Mankind"; and the second is "The Pre-Eminent Significance of Man in Nature."[74] We will borrow Teilhard's phrasing in elaborating our point that we must view man on these two different levels of his existence.

a. The Organic Nature of Mankind

There are three separate, but related, arguments which lead us to the conclusion that the emotional, moral, and ethical behaviour of man are related to the basic stuff of life, and are subject to scientific examination.

(1) First, there is the historical and Biblical assumption that we cannot separate man's physical attributes from his emotional, moral, or spiritual life. We do not arrive at manhood with a body and then find a mind, brain, and spirit. They all belong together and are part of the same unitary concept. This was understood in the Old Testament which always speaks of the unity of the soul-body (nephesh).[75] Each depends on the other for its existence and expression. There is never a body and a

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[74]Teilhard, The Phenomenon of Man, pp. 32-33

[75]Robinson, Christian Doctrine of Man, p. 16

spirit, but a body with a spirit, and a spirit with a body. Consequently, when we relate this Judeo-Christian understanding of man to the concept of man's evolutionary origin, we must conclude that when the first man(or men) became a distinct species, and a unique part of creation by some extraordinary development, he (they) crossed the line into manhood with more than physical appearance. He brought with him the wide range of needs and attributes which have to do with his behaviour, including that behaviour to which we assign moral and ethical values.

(2.) From the research of contemporary genetics, we understand that an individual person receives more than his physical endowments from his parents. This has been known in a general way, but we are becoming more specific as the research accumulates. The individual receives an inheritance of character-forming traits, or at least the potential for them, from his parents and the generations before them. Man's own genetic pool is one that has been existing since the first "non-man" became a living, breathing spirit. Bentley Glass may be limiting ethical value too much when he writes that:

> Our highest ethical values - the love of mother for her child and of the man for his mate, the willingness to sacrifice one's own life for the safety of the family or tribe, and the impulse to care for the weak, the suffering, and the helpless - all of these too had the same primitive beginnings.[76]

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[76]Bentley Glass, Science and Ethical Values (London: Oxford University Press; Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1966), pp. 69-70

But he does remind us forcefully that such tendencies are present in pre-human life. We are equipped with the "stuff," out of which potential, the entirety of life is made.

The logic would seem to follow that the first man, unless God chose to equip him with entirely new characteristics of biological and genetic life, had "inherited" his potential manhood and personality, as well as his physical body. His willingness to share the rewards of his hunting with his "family"; as well as his ability to be successful in the hunt itself, was in the range of characteristics he received from his predecessors.

(3.) Thirdly, we point to the contemporary zoological studies of behaviour. From ecological and ethological studies we have learned that much of what we formerly thought was exclusively human behaviour is also present in sub-human living things. There are difficulties in making a direct comparison between animal and human behaviour. But some valid experiments in animal behaviour studies, especially in the species most closely related to man, are relevant to the study and control of human behaviour. As Professor W. H. Thorpe writes:

> We all exhibit in our behaviour types of action and reaction which we share not merely with our primitive primate ancestors, but with the dog, the protozoan, and the plant. This means that with due care, the attempt to understand animal behaviour by comparing it with our own can sometimes carry us further than, on the face of it, we should have believed possible.[77]

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[77]W. H. Thorpe, Biology and the Nature of Man (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 28

In the evolutionary process; at that point when that which was "not-man" becomes "man," we can discover the rudiments of some of that which came to be called ethical acts. Canon Raven set the stage for the discussion in Natural Religion and Christian Theology, where he writes:

> For the scientist, especially in these days when the evolution of behaviour is attracting the attention both of the biologist and the psychologist, the study of this passage from the animal to the human, is plainly of the greatest importance.[78]

b. The Significance of Man in Nature

The point we make here is that while we must examine man as a "natural" occurrence in evolution, we must also show he is unique and has "a pre-eminent significance." In the first place, we will insist that the question of man's uniqueness is a real question which must be asked anew in each theological generation since Darwin. We cannot approach the study of the nature of man certain that we already have the answers, and support our own notions by a reiteration of our pet theories. There is a legitimate question to be asked regarding what the Imago Dei means for our generation in the light of our knowledge; and what aspects of man's humanity separate him from the rest of creation.

To some, the very question of man's uniqueness is out of place and unnecessary, at least as a serious question. They miss the importance of the discussion and

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[78]Charles E. Raven, Natural Religion and Christian Theology (Cambridge: University Press, 1953; Gifford Lectures, Edinburgh, 1952), p. 26

force of the conclusion, for they have never broached the question. An opinion, like that expressed by E. L. Mascall:

> There is nothing in the history of the human race as it is envisaged by evolutionary biology which need lead us to abandon the traditional belief of Christendom that man is the uniquely favored creature upon whom God has stamped his own image.[79]

while on the surface quite true, is yet misleading for it misses the question of uniqueness.

To many others, the opposite is true. The naturalist allows for nothing beyond man's evolutionary existence, and the gaps in our knowledge are but gaps in our ability to comprehend, not in any extra-natural uniqueness of homo sapiens. To them we repeat Niebuhr's theme that:

> Subsequent developments, after the triumph of Darwin, proved that the religious impulse to defend the unique dignity of man were not as foolish as they seemed, though the methods of defense were both foolish and futile.[80]

To others, the uniqueness of man in nature is a question which demands an answer. It is ultimately classed as a matter of belief, unprovable but not disproven; a matter, like so many other matters of faith, which can be argued indefinitely unless one brings a prior consideration to the discussion. Thorpe warns of the

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[79]E. L. Mascall, The Importance of Being Human: Some Aspects of the Christian Doctrine of Man (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 18

[80]Niebuhr, Book That Shook the World, p. 33

danger in the smoothing over the differences and pretending that all of the controversies have been solved.[81] It is essential that the differences be brought out into the open.

At the start the acceptance of evolution opened the way for the dethronement of the one who was made a little lower than the angels and was crowned with glory and honor. From the exalted position as the "Lord of all creation," man became - to some - "an ape with a few extra tricks." Since then we have faced a steady stream of closely woven evidence that man is not different in kind from other forms of life. And, concludes Professor Bronowski:

> This is where the fulcrum of our fears lies: That man as a species, and we as thinking men, will be shown to be no more than a machinery of atoms.[82]

Canon Raven noted that "a question immediately arises concerning the status and peculiarity of mankind."[83] The uniqueness of man is an issue which must have serious consequences in our theological and ethical thought.

Here there are two distinct aspects of the subject which concern us in this thesis. One involves the unique characteristics of man the species (what separates man from the rest of nature?). The other involves the religious belief in the spiritual and theological significance of man. We will maintain that both can be supported

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[81] Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, p. 131

[82] J. Bronowski, The Identity of Man (London: Heinemann, 1966), p. 7; p. 9

[83] Raven, Natural Religion, p. 22

in the light of contemporary research and reflection.

(1) From the biological and historical point of view, there can be no doubt that the human animal is unique. The statement cannot be challenged seriously; but it is not of great importance for our purpose. To say that "Man is unique" is simply to say for man what can be said for every other species or individual form of life. Man is unique; but so also is the robin, studied by Professor David Lack;[84] the Herring-gull, studied by Professor Niko Tinbergen;[85] the rats studied by S. A. Barnett;[86] the Yucca moth studied by Rau; and the intra-cellular symbiots, studied by Buchner.[87] The pre-Cambrian triglobyte who ruled the world of the sea for almost 3,000,000 years, was also as "unique" as man is now. So are the many thousands of other living organisms who survive in their specialized environments. Each is characterized by some special behavioural activity, some in phenomenal ways.[88] The complexities of reaction which take place in the insect, animal and plant worlds,

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[84] David A. Lack, The Life of the Robin (London: H. E. and G. Witherby, 1943; rev. 1946, Penguin rev. 1953)

[85] Niko Tinbergen, The Herring Gull's World (London: Collins, 1953)

[86] S. A. Barnett, A Study of Behaviour (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1963)

[87] Reported by Ernst Mayr, in Leeper's The Evolution of the Living Organism

[88] There are countless examples, see e.g., the discussion of the behaviour of the larvae and the male stickleback in Ronald Fletcher's Instinct in Man, or the discussion of the cattle tick, in J. Bleibtreu's Parable of the Beast .

exhibit such incredible behaviour (to the novice at least, and impressive to the expert) that their uniqueness is important and purposive.

The statement of man's uniqueness becomes significant when we begin to define the uniqueness. Human beings are unique in a number of different ways. We say that men are unique in their spiritual worship or their moral behaviour. But man is also unique in that he tends not to regulate his numbers; he tends to inflict fatal damage on members of his own species; he pilots airplanes; he plays football and he tells lies. It is a qualitative distinctiveness, and not the uniqueness itself, in which we are interested. The point at issue is whether the biological uniqueness is of such qualitative importance that we can justifiably point to a singular significance of man in nature.

Our conclusion is simple and brief: It is and we can. At that point we find a wide range of agreement with many working biologists.

> While man is clearly an animal, he possesses unique characteristics which obviously make him different from other animals. What matters most for understanding him is that "humanness" which sets him apart from the rest of creation.[89]

Raven's point that we shall have a "truer concept of the process if we study it from its end rather than from its

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[89]Rene Dubos, Man Adapting (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 3

beginning"[90] is well made, and convincing. Although man is part of the ascending scale of developing life, "he has passed a critical point where he became not simply the highest form of life but a different creature from any of those that had preceded him."[91]

Sir Julian Huxley, who many years ago introduced the phrase "the nothing-but-fallacy," also discredited the belief that man is nothing-but an animal. Without a concern for Christian theology, he yet showed the opinion to be incorrect in its cynicism; and sub specie evolutionis, patently false. In his article from Behaviour and Evolution,[92] he elaborates:

> In the past half century there has been much talk, chiefly originating from cultural anthropologists, of the relativity of morals, which has often been construed to mean that no type of morality is or can be better than another; much talk too, chiefly originating from psychoanalysts and psychiatrists, but reinforced from the camp of dogmatic religion and obscurantist philosophy, of the non-rational bases of human behaviour, which has often been construed to mean the supremacy of the irrational, the bankruptcy of reason, and the inadequacy of science, and has indeed led to a widespread revolt against reason and a glorification of unreason.[93]

He continues:

> Even among professional biologists, who ought to know better, the thesis has been proclaimed that no

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[90] Raven, Natural Religion, p. 12

[91] Edmund W. Sinnott, Matter, Mind and Man: The Biology of Human Nature (New York: Altheneum, 1962, first pub. 1957), p. 182

[92] Julian Huxley, in Behaviour and Evolution, ed. Simpson & Roe

[93] Ibid., p. 451

> organism can properly be called higher or lower than another, because all by the fact of their existence and survival, are "equally adapted" and historians have asserted there is not, or even cannot be any such thing as progress in human affairs.[94]

In answer to these critics of man, Huxley wrote a volume of essays.[95] The recent study in biology, he argues, has reinstated man in an exalted position "analogous to that conferred on him as Lord of Creation by Theology." The "theological" view "had a solid biological basis."[96]

To Huxley the distinction cannot be established by an enumeration of the special activities which man performs.

> In point of fact, the great majority of man's activities and characteristics are by-products of his primary distinctive characteristics, and therefore, like them, biologically unique.
>
> On the one hand, conversation, organized games, education, sport, paid work, gardening, the theatre; on the other, conscience, duty, sin, humiliation, vice, penitence - these are all such unique by-products. The trouble indeed, is to find any human activities which are not unique. Even the fundamental biological attributes such as eating, sleeping, and mating have been tricked out by man with all kinds of unique frills and peculiarities.[97]

Huxley accepts these as part of our natural development, but he insists that each attribute is removed, by meaning and conscious adoption, from anything found in the

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[94] Ibid., p. 451

[95] Julian Huxley, The Uniqueness of Man (London: Chatto and Windus, 1941)

[96] Ibid., p. 5

[97] Ibid., p. 29

sub-human world. We might well be joined there at the source; but cultural evolution and the transformation by man himself, makes the human species "unique."

> In the perspective of biology, our business in the world is seen to be the imposition of the best and most enduring of our human standards upon ourselves and our planet. The enjoyment of beauty and interest, the achievement of goodness and efficiency, the enhancement of life and its variety - these are the harvest which our human uniqueness should be called upon to yield.[98]

Through all the jungles of nature; through all the living predators who feed on other life; through all which on first sight degrades humanity, nothing can erase the closing words: "My final belief is in life - in the uniqueness of man."

G. G. Simpson agrees:

> Among all the myriad forms of matter and of life on the earth, or as far as we know the universe, man is unique. . . . Recognition of this kinship with the rest of the universe is necessary for understanding him, but his essential nature is defined by qualities found nowhere else, not by those he has in common with apes, fishes, trees, fire or anything other than himself.[99]

"His place in nature and its supreme significance to man are not defined by his animality, but by his humanity."[100] Further, Dobzhansky writes: "Man is a most extraordinary product of evolution. . . . he cannot any longer be

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[98]Ibid., p. 33

[99]Simpson, Meaning of Evolution, p. 244

[100]Ibid., p. 284

understood except as a uniquely human phenomenon."[101]

> Judged by any reasonable criteria, man represents the highest, most progressive, and most successful product of organic evolution. Strangely, this has been challenged.[102]

Admittedly, the gap between man and the animals has been narrowed considerably in recent years. Much of what we thought was uniquely human, we now know that we share with much of the animal kingdom. The hallmarks of man are not so distinctive as once they were. But:

> Man shares this causal capacity with all things, but in addition he is able freely to intervene in events and purposely to change things, to build up and to destroy, to shape freely and consciously many things in the world around him and in his own soul. Man has the capacity not only to be a link in a chain of causality, but also, after having grasped the importance of a good, to start with a new and freely chosen chain which he can meaningfully and consciously direct toward an end.[103]

(2) With that natural distinction firmly made by those who have no vested interest in a theological view of man, we turn to the second: that which pertains to man as the "ethical animal" or the "theological animal."

Professor Ian Barbour wrote that:

> In an age dominated by religion, it was necessary to assert the independence of science. Today, in an age dominated by science, it may be necessary to assert the independence of religion.[104]

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[101]Theodosius Dobzhansky, The Biological Basis of Human Freedom (New York: Columbia University Press; Columbia Paperback, 1960, original 1956), p. 6

[102]Ibid., p. 86

[103]Dietrich von Hildebrand, Christian Ethics (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1953), pp. 285-86

[104]Ian Barbour, Issues in Science and Religion (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1966), p. 51

What we assert now is the independence of religion regarding the significance of man as a theological being. However natural is the behaviour of man in its origin, we can continue to speak of his pre-eminent significance in nature. We can concur with Canon Raven when he noted that "nothing of religious significance is altered when we realize that our privileges are not exclusive to man."[105] Our concern, as Mascall reminds us, is to understand that the great line of division in the created universe "is not between the plants and animals, or between lifeless matter and living creatures. It is between the realm of matter, living and lifeless alike, . . . and the realm of the spirit."[106] It is the realm of the spirit which concerns us here.

> There is indeed a sense in which man's morality and religion are part of man's adaptive response to his environment - that is half of the story. The other half is that, given our world and the process of life, man's morality and religion, and culture, the development of natural phenomena is incomplete apart from a larger destiny which includes the spiritual dimensions of the life process.[107]

Professor Emil Brunner is helpful here in the "Christian Understanding of Man."[108] Brunner wrote:

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[105] Raven, Natural Religion, p. 23

[106] E. L. Mascall, Christian Theology and Natural Science (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1956 - Bampton Lectures, 1956), p. 265

[107] Kyle Haselden & Philip Hefner, Changing Man: The Threat and The Promise (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1968), pp. 10-11

[108] Emil Brunner, "The Christian Understanding of Man," in T. E. Jessop, et al, The Christian Understanding of Man (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1938)

"It is the task of a Christian anthropology to show that it is impossible to understand man save in the light of God."[109] Man is a "theological being" first of all; the ground of that being, "His goal, his norm, and the possibility of understanding his own nature are all in God." This does not conflict with the natural man. The theologian does not pre-empt the subject from science, but he does find "a special Christian doctrine of freedom and unfreedom, of the destiny and personal existence of man, which is more or less in sharp contrast with every other view of man."[110]

The task of Christian anthropology becomes an inclusive one. It is always "aggressive and eager to get in touch with man," says Brunner. "It is essential . . . that it should always carry on discussions with its rivals." For, explains Brunner:

> To enquire into the nature of man means enquiring into the mind or the spirit from which all questioning springs. All problems are human problems, and all interests are human interests. Therefore, the secret of man extends to the ultimate depths of existence; we cannot understand man aright unless we take into consideration both the primal origin and the final end of all things.[111]

". . . His existence includes his destiny."[112] What man thinks about himself, about his participation and

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[109] Ibid., p. 142

[110] Ibid., p. 143

[111] Ibid., p. 145

[112] Ibid., p. 146

uniqueness in nature is critical to how man will approach his reflection and ethics.

> The most powerful of all spiritual forces is man's view of himself, the way in which he understands his nature and his destiny, indeed it is the one force which determines all the others which influence human life. For in the last resort, all that man thinks and wills springs out of what he thinks and wills about himself, human life, its meaning and its purpose.[113]

Brunner then rejects rival conceptions of man in favor of what he calls a "synthetic anthropology." The Christian message is related to this view which holds that man is composed of "body, mind, and spirit, and yet is a unity." That unity becomes his uniqueness when we understand this three-fold summary of the Christian man: (1) He has been created in the image of God; (2) Through sin, man has come into opposition to his divine destiny; and (3) In Jesus Christ, who reveals to man both his original nature and his contradiction, the original unity is restored.

These statements, writes Brunner, "are statements of faith . . . they spring from the Divine revelation alone." But they refer to the actual man and do not contradict what is discovered elsewhere. In them, man becomes distinctive in the relationship which was, was lost, and was re-established in Christ: the relationship of personhood between man and his Creator.

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[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid., p. 153

> The distinctively human element in man is not a state of existence which can be described independently of the relation to God; it contains something peculiar which defies isolated description, that is, the element of transcendence.[115]

The characteristic which distinguishes man from the rest of creation is "this simple and impressive fact: that he is responsible and personal."[116]

> It is true of course that even his particular mental endowments - his power to form ideas and to be determined by ideas - give him a distinctive place in the life of the universe, and single him out from all the sub-human Creation; but the absolute breach between man and all that is not man occurs here, at the very centre: man alone is a person.[117]

Beyond Brunner, we stress the integrity of man's distinctiveness in the independent inquiries from theological and moral points of view.

> Evolution and biology may tell us something about the nature of man, but in that aspect of himself which makes him unique, man must make use of that very uniqueness in order to attempt to fathom his nature. Man is not just an animal; he is a glorious creation made in the image of God. Unless we can interpret evolution, unless we can get a meaning out of it, contributing in some way to an understanding of man's uniqueness, the theory will have little value for us beyond the realm of biology.[118]

Fothergill is on the point. We must establish uniqueness beyond biology. The evidence is of course largely testimonial. Ultimately, one decides this issue on the basis of the value structure and belief he brings to it.

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[115] Ibid., pp. 154-55

[116] Ibid., p. 151

[117] Ibid., pp. 171-72

[118] Fothergill, Evolution and Christians, p. 331

We can borrow Mascall's summary for our own:

> We might sum up this lecture by saying that the great tradition of Christian theology, in spite of occasional hesitancies and divergences, has steadily taught that a human being is composed of body and soul, of matter and spirit, interpenetrating each other in the most intimate way, and that modern physiology, while casting a good deal of light upon certain aspects of that interconnection has certainly done nothing to supercede it.[119]

There we join the great tradition of Christian theology and hold both ends of the definition of man.

Ian Barbour is helpful again where he pleads for a return, not to the natural theology, but to a "Theology of Nature" - an attempt to view the natural order in the framework of theological ideas derived primarily from the interpretation of historical revelation and religious experience."[120] More specifically, he writes:

> Our interpretation of living beings is neither mechanistic nor vitalistic, but organismic. No elusive entities of the sort postulated by vitalists or dualists are assumed, but the distinctive behaviour of integrated totalities and the emergence of new characteristics at higher levels are indicated.[121]

To be a "Christian naturalist" is an option for the moralist.

We could hope for greater clarity from Professor Barbour than the indication of "integrated totalities and the emergence of new characteristics," but he supports the point - the Christian view of man is compatible with

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[119] Mascall, Christian Theology, p. 251

[120] Barbour, Issues, etc., p. 5; also p. 270

[121] Ibid., p. 7

modern theory. Man originates in nature; but echoing the refrain which runs all the way through Teilhard's Phenomenon of Man:

> In the world, nothing could ever burst forth as final across the different thresholds successively traversed by evolution (however critical they be) which has not already existed in an obscure and primordial way.[122]

More to the point is the Dutch Augustinian, Father A. Hulsbosch. God's Creation is a plea to take seriously the natural origin of man in dealing with theology, and the doctrine of original sin. Hulsbosch concludes that if we want to be serious about the unity of man, the unity of body and soul:

> . . . then we have to say that human existence in this world is radically marked by natural corporeality. All the actions of man, and also his spiritual activities, bear the seal of earthly corporeality. The activity of man is, in the strictest sense, one, that of a soul-body.
>
> The integrity of the natural must be extended to the totality of human existence on earth, and to the existence of the Christian as well.[123]

All of the activity of man bears the seal of his earthly corporeality. The totality of man's existence is involved.

Julian Huxley once complained that medieval theology urged man to think of human life sub specie aeternitatis. He announced that he was attempting to re-think human life sub specie evolutionis.

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[122]Teilhard, Phenomenon, p. 77

[123]A. Hulsbosch, God's Creation: Creation, Sin, and Redemption in an Evolving World (London: Sheed and Ward, 1965), pp. 12-13

> To which the present writer (Dobzhansky) would like to add that evolution, too, will have to be thought about in the light of eternity, eternity in the light of evolution, and human life in the lights of both.[124]

We add the same. Dobzhansky accepts the natural origin of man, but defends man's unique position in creation. In the end he proposes a religious synthesis, which characteristically he calls The Teilhardian Synthesis[125] - a synthesis which incorporates the progressive evolutionary view with man's central significance in it.

> Evolution is a source of hope for man. To be sure, modern evolutionism has not restored the earth to the position of the center of the universe. However, while the universe is surely not geocentric, it may conceivably be anthropocentric. Man, this mysterious product of the world's evolution, may also be its protagonist, and eventually its pilot. In any case the world is not fixed, not finished, and not unchangeable. Everything in it is engaged in evolutionary flow and development.[126]

But everything is also engaged in a continuing importance, with man in a continuing relationship and response to the One on whom the creation depends, both for its existence, and its ultimate meaning. An understanding of his evolutionary origin can enhance that relationship and response, and can bring greater meaning to his ethical decisions.

We can continue to speak with confidence and conviction regarding the significance of man; and conclude with Teilhard:

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[124] Dobzhansky, Biological Basis, p. 122

[125] Dobzhansky, Biology of Ultimate Concern, chap. 6

[126] Ibid., p. 7

> Man: not simply a zoological type like the others. But man, the nucleus of a movement of infolding and convergence in which, localized on our little planet (lost though it be in time and space) is manifest what is probably the most characteristic and most illuminating current that affects the immensities that envelop us.
>
> Man, on who and in whom the universe enfolds itself.[127]

That man is pre-eminent!

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[127] Teilhard deChardin, Man's Place in Nature (New York: Harper & Row, 1966, pp. 35-36

4. An Historical Account of Evolutionary Ethics

a. Darwin

In The Origin of the Species, at first Darwin took great care not to include man in the evolution of life. Its theme is simply that all living things develop from a single source, by means of "natural selection." There was no "special creation" of each species. Basil Willey has speculated that Darwin deliberately refrained from emphasizing the descent of man, "lest the scandal of it should hamper the acceptance of his main doctrine."[128] The book was written to present a scientific theory. All Darwin mentioned about man in the Origin was a concluding sentence: "Light will be thrown on the origin of man and his history." In later editions it was changed to "much light."[129] "God" and "Creator" appear in the book, and it seems probable that because of his respect for the Christian faith, whose ministry he almost entered earlier, he purposely withheld what appeared to go against the scripture.[130] The closing lines of the book reveal the

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[128] Basil Willey, Darwin and Butler: Two Versions of Evolution (London: Chatto & Windus, 1960), p. 18.

[129] Cf. Mortimer J. Adler, The Difference of Man and the Difference it Makes (A Meredian Book, World Pub. Co., 1968; original, N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967), p. 72

[130] There is some continuing argument regarding Darwin's actual religious belief. In The Autobiography of Charles Darwin 1809 - 1882: With Original Omissions Restored (London: Collins, 1958), ed. by Nora Barlow (Darwin's granddaughter), some of the original autobiography

kind of respect which Darwin had both for the Creator and the life process:

> There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms, or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.[131]

In spite of his caution, however, his critics and defenders both realized that the implications and "the light to be thrown on the origin of man and his history" were enormous. Not only from organized religion, but also from scientists and secular philosophers alike, Darwin was immediately criticized for violating the teaching of Genesis.[132]

In answer to his critics, and to correct the bias of some of his supporters, Darwin published later a book dealing directly with man. It is not as well known, but more important for us: The Descent of Man.[133] There, as well as less importantly in The Expression of Emotions

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which had been "suppressed" by the family to protect Darwin's "religious reputation" is restored. They indicate that Darwin had more doubts than we ever realized, but even now, an accurate rendering of what Darwin actually believed is most difficult.

[131]Darwin, Origin of Species, p. 490

[132]For a complete discussion of "The Reception of the Origin," see chap. 8 of Gavin deBeer's Charles Darwin, pp. 157 ff. (New York and London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd., 1963)

[133]Charles Darwin, The Descent of Man (London: John Murray, first published 1871, new ed. 1901)

in Man and Animals,[134] he discussed the impact of natural selection for man and his behaviour. As Darlington commented, "He took courage in both hands," when he wrote: "Let us apply these generally admitted principles to the races of man, viewing him in the same spirit as a naturalist would any other animal."[135]

Man was to be included in the evolutionary process and more, the implications went much further than the relatively simple acceptance of his physical descent. The Descent of Man makes an unrestricted application of evolutionary theory to homo sapiens. It included man's mind and behaviour as well.

Darwin approached the moral sense of man apologetically:

> This great question (of the moral sense) has been discussed by many writers of consummate ability; and my sole excuse for touching on it, is the impossibility of here passing it over; and because, as far as I know, no one has approached it exclusively from the side of natural history.[136]

His approach was typically cautious. After we accept the conclusion on the origin of man, Darwin said that we become aware that "The high standard of our intellectual powers and moral disposition is the greatest difficulty

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[134]Charles Darwin, The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals (London: John Murray, 1872) This book is still useful in the ethological studies of man. In it Darwin discussed anxiety, grief, suffering, joy, love, devotion, anger, fear, weeping, et al, in their evolutionary settings and meanings.

[135]Darlington, Genetics and Man, p. 264

[136]Darwin, Descent of Man, p. 149

which presents itself."[137] Although he was admittedly not a keen philosopher, Darwin was not easily fooled. There was no great enthusiasm to debase man which would have taken him too far. There was no attempt to over-simplify and hint that all aspects of man's morality are discovered and understood in the evolutionary process. He understood that.

> Ultimately our moral sense or conscience becomes a highly complex sentiment - originating in the social instincts, largely guided by the approbation of our fellow-men, ruled by reason, self-interest, and in later times by deep religious feelings, and confirmed by instruction and habit.[138]

Darwin subscribed to the judgment of those who maintained that of all the differences between man and the lower animals, the "moral sense or conscience" is by far the most important. It must be "the most noble of all the attributes of man."[139]

As a student of natural history Darwin did not pretend to understand the intricacies of moral philosophy,[140] but he did understand that the "specifically human attributes," which have to do with our moral qualities, also appeared at some stages of pre-human life. The problem

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[137] Ibid., p. 931

[138] Ibid., p. 203

[139] Ibid., p. 148

[140] See esp. Charles Darwin and the Golden Rule, by William Emerson Ritter (New York: Storm Publishers, 1954) ed. from his writings by Edna Watson Bailey; pp. 39 ff.

which arises with that knowledge must be faced with him. For:

> The development of the moral qualities is a more interesting problem. The foundation lies in the social instincts, including under this term family ties. . . . Animals endowed with social instincts take pleasure in one another's company, warn one another of danger, defend and aid one another in many ways.[141]

It is doubtful whether Darwin realized that there would be so wide a range of study where his statement would apply. Animal behavioural studies are now coming into great prominence in the relatively new science of ethology.[142] They confirm what Darwin wrote. Neither could he have been aware of the psychological and sociological research in the twentieth century which would make the issue more complex. But he did sense how critical this study of morality was for a starting-point. As the reasoning powers and foresight of men developed in his social setting, Darwin speculated that each individual "would soon learn that if he aided his fellow creatures, he would commonly receive aid in return."[143] From that motive alone, the individual man could have acquired the habit of coming to the aid of his fellow-men: that is to say, natural selection would have "favoured" the individuals who were best capable of acquiring the habit.

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[141] Darwin, Descent, p. 932

[142] Although it is probably correct to say that Darwin himself was the first ethologist.

[143] Darwin, Descent, p. 201

> A tribe including many members who, from possessing in a high degree the spirit of patriotism, fidelity, obedience, courage, and sympathy, were always ready to aid one another, and to sacrifice themselves for the common good, would be victorious over most other tribes; and this would be natural selection. . . . Morality is an important element in their success.[144]

And, if that sounds naïve to the experienced student, it is excusable in the pioneer setting in which Darwin wrote.

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There is a somewhat misleading rendering of Darwin's view of evolution-and-ethics in Professor David Lack's Evolutionary Theory and Christian Belief.[145]

First, Lack writes that Darwin "ascribed moral standards not to natural selection but to human reasoning."[146] Second, he writes that Darwin "rejected natural selection as the agent of moral improvement."[147] As proof for these statements Dr. Lack selects a brief passage from the Descent. Darwin wrote:

> It is extremely doubtful whether the offspring of the more sympathetic and benevolent parents, or of those who were the most faithful to their comrades, would be reared in greater numbers than the children of selfish and treacherous parents belonging to the same tribe.[148]

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[144] Ibid., p. 203

[145] Lack, Evolutionary Theory

[146] Ibid., p. 91

[147] Ibid., p. 93

[148] Ibid., p. 93. Quoted from Darwin's The Descent of Man, p. 200

In the first place, Lack's comment depends on a partial reading of Darwin. To write that Darwin "ascribed moral standards to reason and not natural selection," implies that Darwin intended to offer a source for reasoning and moral behaviour which is not found in the natural process itself: as if some Kantian a priori is reintroduced. But Darwin intended no such thing. He did use the words "reason" and "rational," but he usually was referring to these terms in their "natural" and not their metaphysical sense. This "reason" to Darwin, meant that "reasoning power" which came to man in the evolutionary process. As a corrective to Lack, Sir Gavin deBeer writes that:

> Darwin's approach to this problem was to claim that any animal whatever, endowed with well-marked social instincts, would inevitably acquire a moral sense or conscience, as soon as its intellectual powers had become as well developed in man.[149]

The moral sense, i.e., the ability to make judgments regarding moral behaviour, appears only in man at least as far as we are prepared to argue here. But the moral acts, or the acts to which we attribute moral values, appear first in the evolutionary process.

Lack seems to have misread Darwin and The Descent of Man. The quotation:

> It is extremely doubtful whether the offspring of the more sympathetic and benevolent parents, or of those who were the most faithful to their comrades, would be reared in greater numbers than the children of selfish and treacherous parents belonging to the same tribe.

is taken out of context from Darwin's discussion of the

difficulties involved in tracing the origin of the social and moral qualities in man.[150] Darwin wrote:

> But it may be asked: how within the limits of the same tribe did a large number of members first become endowed with these social and moral qualities, and how was the standard of excellence raised?[151]

Then, immediately, follows the quotation Lack selected to make his point: "It is extremely doubtful, etc..." The quote is used correctly only as it highlights Darwin's difficulty in tracing the origin of moral values of particular individuals in any given tribe. That is a different point from the one Lack was making. In fact Darwin goes on to explain the opposite. Moral acts, he writes, have developed in the process. Darwin writes further:

> Although the circumstances leading to increase in the number of those thus endowed within the same tribe, are too complex to be clearly followed out, we can trace some of the probable steps.[152]

Then follows Darwin's estimate as to how the steps can be traced. As we have noted above:

> In the first place, as the reasoning powers and foresight of the members became improved, each man would soon learn that if he aided his fellow-men, he would commonly receive aid in return.[153]

> But another and much more powerful stimulus to the development of the social virtues is afforded by the praise and blame of our fellow-men.[154]

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[150] Darwin, Descent of Man, pp. 200 ff.

[151] Ibid., p. 201

[152] Ibid.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid.

"We may therefore conclude that primeval man . . . was influenced by the praise and blame of his fellows."[155] And, finally, turning Professor Lack's comment and argument directly around, Darwin writes:

> It must not be forgotten that although a high standard of morality gives but a slight or no advantage to each individual man and his children over the other men of the same tribe, yet that an increase in the number of well-endowed men and an advancement in the standard of morality will certainly give an immense advantage to one tribe over another. A tribe . . . always ready to aid one another . . . would be victorious over most other tribes; and this would be natural selection.[156]

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But, to come back to our point: with Darwin, natural selection was not a slave to the beastliness of creatures who by brute force were able to conquer other forms of life. It moved along the lines set in part, by social cooperation. Man is impelled by the same general wish to aid his fellows. Although similar to what takes place in the pre-human worlds, the difference is that moral behaviour:

> . . . no longer consists (in man) solely of a blind instinctive impulse, but is much influenced by the praise and blame of his fellows. The appreciation of the bestowal of praise and blame both rest on sympathy; and this emotion . . . is one of the most important elements of the social instincts.[157]

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[155] Ibid., p. 202

[156] Ibid., p. 203

[157] Ibid., p. 934

To Darwin the moral sense follows from the nature of the social instincts; and from man's acknowledgement of the approbation and disapprobation of his fellow-men; and from the high activity of his mental faculties.[158] Man's strength as a social animal he owes in part, to his weakness as an individual - man needs man to survive. The final analysis from Darwin is a hopeful one:

> As man advances in civilization and as small tribes are united into larger communities, the simplest reason would tell each individual that he ought to extend his social instincts and sympathies to all members of the same nation, though personally unknown to him. This point being once reached, there is only an artificial barrier to prevent his sympathies extending to men of all nations and races.[159]

Darwin contributed to our initial understanding of the behaviour of man in the evolutionary process. Man arose from the pre-human world without a major emphasis on power or force or aggression. He carries with him the vices of the animal kind, but he carries the roots of social virtue as well.

> Animal mothers love and comfort their offspring, and adults sacrifice themselves for them. The basis of altruism is there. If to this level of behaviour were added the development of the higher mental faculties, and the power of articulate language, the guide to action would be the common good under the influence of approbation or blame from fellow members of the social group.[160]

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[158] Ibid., p. 933

[159] Descent, p. 491-92. Quoted by Stephen Pepper, Ethics (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960) p. 219

[160] deBeer, Darwin, p. 213

b. Post-Darwin

As much as Charles Darwin believed that the moral sense of man was related to evolution, he lends no support to the establishment of an evolutionary ethics *per se*.[161] The term "evolutionary ethics" is restricted here to the theory which determines that we should find our source of "value" in the evolutionary process. We will mention a few, which for sake of brevity can be grouped into two divisions: (1) what we will call "The Ethic of Competition," and (2) "The Ethic of Cooperation."

(1) The Ethic of Competition

The first we can approach through the writings of "the philosopher of evolution" and the grand champion of the Social Darwinists,[162] Herbert Spencer. As opposed to Darwin, Spencer became the high priest of the gladiatorial theory of existence.[163] His criterion of value was in the struggle for existence which he felt was

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[161] D. Daiches Raphael, A Century of Darwin, ed. S. A. Barnett, "Darwinism and Ethics," p. 343

[162] Reinhold Niebuhr, with more care than most, is careful to point out that Spencer was not literally a social Darwinist; but he did regard "the Darwiniam triumph as validating his own historical fatalism," and consequently joined the social Darwinists in spirit. Cf. Niebuhr, in A Book that Shook the World, p. 33.

[163] For a good brief discussion of Spencer where special interest is shown in Spencer's role in evolutionary social science and biological principles, see J. W. Burrow, Evolution and Society: A Study in Victorian Social Theory, pp. 179-226

characteristic of the evolutionary process. Since natural selection chose the "fittest" to survive, society should insure that we continue likewise. Spencer said we need a rigorous maintenance of the conditions under which human life and society arose.[164] "Natural competition" had moved from purely beastly struggle into a more civilized social conflict, with its subtle regulations, or lack of them. Only if we provide for the continuation of "natural struggle" could the evolutionary advance continue.

Spencer noted the importance of cooperative activity in the process, but mainly because this was part of the higher phase of evolution. In The Data of Ethics, he stated that "conduct gains ethical sanction in proportion as the activities become less and less militant." One should behave so that he will achieve his ends without preventing others from achieving theirs.[165] But this was simply a kindly application of good Victorian ethical procedure, to be understood in the context of the natural working-out of evolutionary progress.

To Spencer, the "fittest" was the strongest, the one who was able to emerge victorious in the competitive struggles for life. As nature had previously chosen only

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[164]Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1873) Extract in Bert James Lowenberg's Darwinism: Reaction and Reform (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1957), p. 6

[165]Herbert Spencer, The Data of Ethics (London: Williams & Norgate, 1879), pp. 19-20

the strongest (or had allowed the strongest to become the chosen), our moral codes should do the same. Kindness, soft-heartedness, and public welfare were acceptable, but in the end were judged by how well they favoured selection. If they impeded advance, they were not considered to be ethical "goods." "For him the goal of evolutionary process turned out to be a kind of Victorian paradise for utilitarians with a passion for urban sanitation and laissez faire."[166] Nature's natural ethic is good.

The history of twentieth century moral ideals and societal activity has discarded Spencer's ethical system.[167] Even if Spencer had been correct in his interpretation of evolutionary history then we would conclude that he took the wrong side in what we should do about it. We would rather follow T. H. Huxley and conclude that if evolution is advanced by social struggle we should go out and fight against it.

Yet, despite its inherent weaknesses, Spencerism, as opposed to Darwinism, became an important ethical influence in some parts of the Western World, especially in the United States. The spread of this "Vogue of Spencer" is admirably recorded by historian Richard Hofstadter in his book: Social Darwinism in American Thought,[168] where

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[166] Casserly, Morals and Man, p. 75

[167] One exception is Sir Peter Medawar's appropriate praise of Spencer's Theory of General Evolution, in The Art of the Soluble (London: Methuen & Co., 1967), pp. 40 passim. It should be added that we think Medawar is also wrong.

[168] Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought (Philadelphia: The University of Philadelphia Press, 1945)

it is traced through many areas of American social philosophy and economic development; including William Graham Sumner, Lester Ward, the American Pragmatists,[169] and many others, not least of which are a few of the industrial magnates such as John D. Rockefeller and Dunfermline-born steel impresario Andrew Carnegie.[170] Rockefeller, for example, once taught his Sunday School class, which he conducted each Sunday morning in the Baptist Church:

> The growth of a large business is merely a survival of the fittest. . . . The American Beauty Rose can be produced in the splendour and fragrance which brings cheer to its beholder only by sacrificing the early buds which grow up around it. This is not an evil tendency in business. It is merely the working out of a law of nature and a law of God.[171]

And Carnegie wrote about his "Gospel of Wealth"!

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[169]There is a book dealing specifically with the American Pragmatists. It is a much more philosophical, as opposed to the thorough historical account of Mr. Hofstadter, but an excellent study: Evolution and the Founders of Pragmatism, by Philip Wiener (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Harvard University Press, 1949)

[170]It is only of incidental interest that Andrew Carnegie, who at that time was on top of the United States steel industry, became a great friend of Spencer's. He became a devoted follower and adored the idea of non-intervention of government in business affairs. The "fittest" were surviving right well in the "natural conflicts" of the business world. Cf. Carnegie's own semi-Social Darwinistic The Gospel of Wealth (New York: The Carnegie Corporation, 1900); but not unmixed with charity to the less than fit. In the end Carnegie's "unnatural compassion" gave way, and he distributed his wealth throughout the world.

[171]This incident about Rockefeller is recorded in Anthony Flew's Evolutionary Ethics (Macmillan, 1957), p. 5. In a similar end result, the way of all flesh, the Sunday School teachers won out; for, as is well known by now,

A "Law of God" - great assurance for one who was noted for the unkindly way Rockefeller chose to sacrifice the "early buds" of the poor small struggling business men who opened poor small struggling petrol stations, only to be sacrificed to the biggest and best "American Beauty" of all - The Standard Oil Company, largest and best surviving rose in all the land.

Social Darwinism was an ethic ideally suited to the "Robber Barons"[172] and the self-styled economic prowess of the age. Yet, the followers were neither Social nor Darwinists. Professor Ashley Montagu caught the contradiction when he wrote:

> The tendentious habit of thinking of evolution in terms of the struggle for existence, by means of which it is believed, the fittest are alone selected for survival while the weakest are ruthlessly condemned to extinction, is not only an incorrect view of the facts, but is a habit which has done a considerable amount of harm.[173]

Or Niebuhr's more biting criticism:

> Social Darwinism served to dull the conscience of the Western World to the injustices of its rising industrialism. It prevented the adoption of the ameliorations of economic inequality, the creation of adequate equilibria of power by which the West was ultimately saved from Communism; but the illusions were potent enough to delay action so that

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The Rockefeller Foundation in New York, aside from keeping many Rockefellers, continues to assist the American Bible Society, and countless other charitable organizations throughout the world.

[172]Cf. Matthew Josephson's The Robber Barons: The Great American Capitalists, 1861-1901 (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1934)

[173]Ashley Montagu, The Direction of Human Development: Biological and Social Bases (London: Watts, 1957), p.26

> the Marxist rebellion could be initiated among the desperate industrial classes of the continent.[174]

From Spencer we locate the "ethic of struggle" in the work of the late eminent British anthropologist, Sir Arthur Keith. Keith introduced his thesis when he wrote that:

> Our present task is to account for man's inborn evil predispositions, his power to hate, to demand an eye for an eye, to slake his thirst for revenge, to explain his ruthless, merciless, cruel passions. There are, too, his ambitions, his hunger for priority, for place, for rank, for power, for profit, for praise. Why are most men competitive, aggressive, pugnacious, covetous, envious and self-seeking?[175]

The answer which Keith gave is that it began in the natural origin and development of man. In Essays on Human Evolution,[176] he argues that the evolutionary process has "taught" man his evil.

> . . . the civilized mind does not work with, but against, the old powers of evolution. Indeed, one may say that the more anti-evolutionary the disposition of a man is, the higher does he stand in the mental scale of civilization.[177]

Part of the explanation had to do with Keith's concept of tribalism. "Tribalism," he explains, "was nature's method

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[174]Niebuhr, Book that Shook the World, p. 33

[175]Keith, Essays, p. 21 (American title is more specific: Evolution and Ethics)

[176]For a more complete understanding of this phase of Keith's work (he was a most highly respected anthropologist in addition to this work on ethics and evolution) see The Place of Prejudice in the Modern World (London: Williams & Norgate, 1931) and Darwinism and What it Implies (London: Watts and Co., Ltd., 1928)

[177]Keith, Essays, p. 86

of bringing about the evolution of man."[178]

> . . . such morality or ethical behaviour as favours the evolutionary growth and progress of a tribe is approved by the tribal conscience and is regarded as a virtue, while an opposite kind of behaviour is not approved and is named a vice.[179]

He continues:

> . . . birth determines membership. . . . One may be sure, seeing that individual freedom was regulated by tribal opinion, that any indulgence of liberty by the individual, in word or deed, would be frowned upon by the tribe unless it answered to a tribal need.[180]

We have here a curious echo of what has been frequently discussed in a slightly more personal way, under Freudian psychology, which warns of the inception of ethical ideals as imposed on the super-ego of the individual child by the figures of authority: his parents. Those ideals then become the "unconscious" part of one's ethical attitudes and behaviour. Keith raises the speculation that the original tribes to which our immediate ancestors belonged, deposited something of the same kind of "unconscious" ethical attitudes into all of us. The earliest "moral" act was forced upon the individual by the group. "When you know the basal mentality," writes Keith, "one fitted for tribal life - do you wonder at the disorder and turmoil which now affect the detribalized part of our world?"[181]

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[178] Ibid., p. 23

[179] Ibid., p. 25

[180] Ibid., p. 33

[181] Ibid., p. 23

According to Keith, the "original sin" of mankind, such as we can use the term in this context, is one which is in the evolutionary origin of man as he "inherited" the beastly parts of his nature.

Man's moral duty, Keith then writes, is to combat this natural origin. Keith laments the condition of modern man in words that almost belong to classical Christianity: "Human nature will have to be re-made from top to bottom. . . before we can hope to yoke Christian ethics to the purposes of human development."[182] "So far evolution has triumphed over Christianity."[183]

Christ's directive to love our fellow-men, and our neighbours as ourselves, says Keith, annihilates the law of evolution: "throws a bomb right into the very heart of the machinery by which and through which nature has sought to build up . . . mankind."[184]

> Meantime let me say that the conclusion I have come to is this: the law of Christ is incompatible with the law of evolution - as the law of evolution has worked hitherto. Nay, the two laws are at war with each other; the law of Christ can never prevail until the law of evolution is destroyed.[185]

Keith's point is of course compatible with much that can be observed in modern life. The warfare continues

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[182] Ibid., p. 63

[183] Ibid., p. 58

[184] Ibid., p. 62

[185] Ibid., p. 13

and can be seen in so many different corners of the earth; in the teen-age gangs in New York's West Side, in the continuing struggles in Vietnam, in the Middle East, in the more subtle but startling struggles which work their havoc through damagingly competitive business procedures, and in the personal lives of the people who are the perennial victims of senseless violence. Keith makes sense in the daily forum of human experience.

But in fact he does not go far enough. He does not go on to note that nature has given us other tendencies as well. Spencer can more easily be excused for the delight he took in shocking the Victorian world with his view of evolutionary struggle. He was among the first to champion Darwin, and in his haste to convince a non-believing world, he misinterpreted the intent of the Origin.

But for Keith, it seems inexcusable. By the time this book was published in 1946, much research and reflection had shown how one-sided his point was. However sympathetic we want to be, remembering that he was writing when the world was experiencing the holocaust of World War II, and the horrid atrocities of Hitler's Germany in its attempt to purify the human race by exterminating all those who were declared "unfit"; we must conclude that his evolutionary viewpoint is inadequate, and misleading.

Natural selection is not the story of struggle, and our ethic should not be to fight against it. We conclude with a criticism made by Professor G. G. Simpson:

> A similar idea has been developed at greater length by Sir Arthur Keith in an extraordinary book . . . whose recent date 1946 makes it a gross anachronism. Sir Arthur gives an extended and horrendous exposition of tooth and claw ethics, which he never quite condemns and which he thinks inherent in evolution. With this he contrasts human or (as he insists) anti-evolutionary ethics. In spite of talking all around every side of the problem, he never quite faces the issue as to which set of ethics can or should be followed or how they are to be reconciled.[186]

Keith was against the struggle he saw as inherent in the process. At least he does not join Spencer in asking us to align ourselves with social conflict and open competition of the fittest. But his own ethic and his own interpretation of evolutionary advance must also be rejected.

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[186] Simpson, Meaning of Evolution, pp. 298-99

(2.) The Ethic of Cooperation

Dear Friend, do not with weary soul aspire
Away from the gray earth, your sad abode;
No! Throb with th' earth, let earth your body tire -
So help your brothers bear the common load.

Prince Pëtr Alekseyevich Kropotkin
Ethics: Origin and Development

The second evolutionary ethic is "The Ethic of Co-operation," which while acknowledging that struggle exists in evolution, favours the presence of social cooperation in determining what evolution teaches about ethics. The essential condition for evolutionary success, they say, was the increase in social harmony as the group learned to function as a social unit.

W. K. Clifford was the first post-Darwinian we know of who derived a social morality from "natural" cooperation.[187] The ensuing history of that idea is recorded by W. C. Allee in The Social Life of the Animals.[188] Professor Allee takes the theory, or some vague expression of it, back to the fifth century B.C., with the philosopher Empedocles; relocates it along the way (especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), and brings it to the early twentieth with Pëtr Alekseyevich

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[187] W. K. Clifford, Lectures and Essays, ed. Leslie Stephen (London: Macmillan & Co., 1879)

[188] W. C. Allee, The Social Life of Animals (William Heinemann Ltd., 1938)

Kropotkin, whose brief sermonic poem we used to introduce this section. Allee ends with his own argument that "there is a general principle of automatic cooperation which is one of the fundamental biological principles."[189]

The ethic derived is simple: since social cooperation has worked in the past history of animal evolution, we should adopt it for the basis of our ethical principles today. In discussing "some human implications," Allee writes:

> Conscious cooperation is so comparatively new in an animal world many millions of years old, that we may underrate its strength and importance if we are not reminded of its foundations in simple physiology and primitive instinct.[190]

Before Allee, Scots Presbyterian preacher and sometime natural scientist Henry Drummond tried to Christianize Spencer's evolutionary theories, especially in The Ascent of Man,[191] published in 1894. He argued that Spencer had exaggerated the part which struggle plays. That was a partial truth, but the full view had to include a "Struggle for the Life of Others." Drummond was admittedly on an important point; but he exaggerated in the reverse. His favorite example of the good moral action which evolution seemed to him to teach was "the animal mother caring for her young - in the wind and the cold and the rain." But

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[189] Allee, Social Life, p. 35

[190] Ibid., p. 185

[191] Henry Drummond, (The Lowell Lectures on) The Ascent of Man (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1894)

Drummond, as John Kent recently noted, forgot about "the newly-born reindeer, dropped quivering in the snow and compelled to struggle to its feet to keep up with a herd which cannot wait for a weakling."[192] The preacher was more familiar with carefully guarded household pets than with nature in the wild, although mother cats are also known to eat their kittens.

In trying to put a touch of warmth and sentiment into the evolutionary process, Drummond had imagined that the process was one in which altruism was gradually winning out, and had inadvertently taken sides with the cooperative theory of evolutionary ethics, or at least had given support to those who had.

The first comprehensive treatment of the ethic of cooperation was in Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution[193] by Pëtr Kropotkin, the leading, early proponent of the theory. In explaining the theme of that book, Kropotkin noted that "struggle" was present in the process as a matter of survival - life literally feeds on life - but it is chiefly "limited to struggles between different species." The predominant fact of nature, he wrote, is mutual aid.

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[192] John Kent, From Darwin to Blanchford: The Role of Darwinism in Christian Apologetic 1875 to 1910 (London: Dr. William's Trust, 1966), p. 21

[193] Pëtr A. Kropotkin, Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution (London: William Heinemann, 1902; Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1939)

> Within each species, and within the groups of different species we find living together, the practice of mutual aid is the rule, and therefore this last aspect of animal life plays a far greater part than does warfare in the economy of nature. . . . Mutual aid is the predominant fact of nature.[194]

If nature is taken as a whole, there is no triumph of the warlike features of man and the animals.

> It seems, on the contrary, that species decidedly weak . . . and not at all warlike - nevertheless, succeed best in the struggle for life; and owing to their sociality and mutual protection, they even displace much more powerfully-built competitors and enemies.[195]

In the later writing, Kropotkin pointed to "the steady progress of moral conceptions as the leading principle of evolution."[196]

> Man no longer needs to clothe his ideals of moral beauty, and of a society based on justice, with the garb of superstition: he does not have to wait for the Supreme Wisdom to remodel society. He can derive his ideals from Nature and he can draw the necessary strength from the study of its life.[197]

No better description can be given of an "evolutionary ethic": "He can derive his ideals from Nature and he can draw the necessary strength from the study of its life."

A more recent proponent of the cooperative ethic in evolution is akin to Kropotkin in many important ways. Dr. Chauncey D. Leake, in a written dialogue with

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[194]Kropotkin, Ethics: Origin and Development, tr. Louis S. Friedland and Joseph R. Piroshnikoff (New York: Tudor Publishing Co., 1924; reprinted 1947), p. 14

[195]Ibid., pp. 14-15

[196]Kropotkin, Ethics, p. 19

[197]Ibid., p. 3

philosopher Dr. Patrick Romanell,[198] seeks for a "naturally operative principle to govern human conduct," and proposed that "a scientific versus a metaphysical approach to ethics" be adopted by modern man.

Leake calls his scientific approach to ethics "Ethicogenesis." Based on the assumption that "we can agree that for any individual or group of individuals, survival is 'the' good."[199] Since individuals and groups are in contact with other individuals and other groups, "survival for them is also good." The ethical relationships must then be conducive towards the survival of all concerned.

> From a consideration of our biological knowledge, the implication is clear at once that survival for an individual living thing or for a particular living species is "good" for that individual or that species. . . . Survival is "good," therefore, in the very significant sense that if the species fails to survive, "goodness" has no further meaning for that species.[200]

It follows then, says Leake, that we should derive a natural ethic which leads to human survival. And, echoing Kropotkin and Allee, the probability of the survival of groups or individuals "increases with the degree with which they harmoniously adjust themselves to each other and their environment."[201] He applies the biological principle of symbiosis (the association of dissimilar

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[198] Chauncey D. Leake & Patrick Romanell, Can We Agree? - A Scientist and a Philosopher Argue About Ethics (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1950)

[199] Ibid., p. 24

[200] Ibid., p. 18

[201] Ibid., p. 26

organisms to their mutual advantage) to the behaviour of human beings, and their ethical behaviour as well.

This symbiotic principle becomes significant in our everyday affairs. All organisms, says Leake, survive to the extent to which they adopt the principle of mutual cooperation with each other in the environment.

> There are several important implications which follow from the symbiotic principle as stated. Since satisfaction is a biologically and psychologically significant factor in survival, there will remain the urge on the part of human beings to achieve satisfaction.
>
> If then it is appreciated that relationships between humans tend to survive in proportion to the mutual satisfaction derived from them, it is incumbent upon an individual to help make the relationship in which he participates with another individual as satisfying to the other individual as to himself.[202]

A kind of biological golden rule, with scientific support. And, if one can side with Leake in the beginning, i.e., if we can postulate that survival is the ultimate value for man, it is difficult to argue with him as his argument develops. It is his premise and the procedure which elicit our criticism.

The premise that "survival is the good for man" is one that Professor Romanell calls a "biological egoism." Earlier, Leake wrote that "If a species fails to survive, 'goodness' has no further meaning for that species." But that would be true only if we saw morality alone in its natural setting, rather than expand the meaning of moral judgments into the larger metaphysical realm which make other considerations important.

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[202] Ibid., pp. 26-27

Further, from a study of the way natural selection works, we add that Leake has ignored a fact of evolution: that the will to survive is occasionally not the motivating factor of behaviour. The defense of one's territory, or of others in the group often takes precedence over the individual will to survive. At times, survival is not only secondary; but, in the interests of the group, it can be selected negatively.

Leake is not unlike so many other proposers of evolutionary ethics when he takes a metaphysical goal from outside biology, in this case the "good" of survival, and uses evidence from science to support it from within. Dr. Romanell's brief summary is appropriate: Leake's 'Golden Rule' is incompatible with its metaphysical foundation."[203]

Beyond that initial objection, Romanell includes a convincing methodological argument which arises out of the definition of ethics.[204] Leake had argued that ethics

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[203]Incidentally, in making his refutation of Leake, Romanell shows a distorted view of Darwin and natural selection; as if cooperative behaviour was unimportant to the species, and that Darwin taught only the beastliness of the world of nature. His distortion is far more serious than the one-sidedness of Leake. The latter is marshalling evidence for one side of a scientific theory, to support the principle of symbiosis. He consequently does not choose to include detail on what he obviously as a biologist knows is true. Romanell, on the other hand, does not appear to understand that Leake's evidence as presented, is true and compatible entirely with Darwin and what we know of evolution. Cf. e.g., p. 49

[204]Leake & Romanell, Can We Agree? p. 50

belongs to science and not to metaphysics; and that the naturally operative principle should replace metaphysical speculation. Romanell's response is convincing:

> Ethics, by definition, is necessarily a normative pursuit because it aims at determining systematically whether a special class of non-sensory objects of human conduct or character has or has not the specific type of value designated as moral. Whereas, for example, biology is the study of life as it exists in nature, ethics is an examination of the good life, whether it exists or not.[205]

A natural ethic, cooperatively based or not, keeps us bound too closely to the "is." "Man may very well survive in the flesh at the terrific cost of perishing in the spirit."[206]

We can accept that social cooperation among human beings is a partial answer (perhaps even a key answer) to the ethical problems of our society, without also believing that it is dictated to us by natural selection.[207]

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[205] Ibid., p. 35

[206] Ibid., p. 56

[207] Also of interest here is a recent article by John H. Crook on "Cooperation in Primates" (Eugenics Review: vol. 58, no. 2, June 1966). Crook is discussing the defensive behaviour of adult baboons defending each other, and appearing to cooperate with each other not only in the defense of the tribe, but in sharing food, protecting infants, and where a token system of norms for behaviour appears to be enforced by punishments for failure to comply. Crook also relates a study from Hall and Devore, where a mother with an infant baboon attracts much "friendly interest" from passers-by; and older males show some limited "play activity" with the young. A truly remarkable possibility in this study.

Anthropomorphism is of course an obvious danger, for even the most objective student cannot help seeing the behaviour through the eyes of a man, but it is a danger of

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which Crook and his fellow researchers are fully aware. Consequently there is especial care to show objectivity. For example, he confesses to the inability to establish clearly that "cooperation" has occurred when a group of chimpanzees, for example, all wave clubs at an attacking leopard. It appears to be a community effort, but it could after all, be but "a response of separate individuals responding to a common stimulus - like a crowd rushing from a burning building." (p. 64, etc.) But he establishes the similarity of behavioural activity and notes how significant they can be for an understanding of human behaviour; even if in the end he draws the clear distinction: "Human cooperation is performed with conscious intent: it is truly teleological behaviour. Primate behaviour often appears both deliberate and purposive, but to infer "purpose" is generally suspect among biologists unused to such high grade performances." (p. 64)

c. Evolutionary Ethics: Two Modern Expressions

The problem of the relationship of evolution and ethics is an enduring one. Two modern proponents deserve our mention: Sir Julian Huxley and Professor C. H. Waddington. Some others such as Professor G. G. Simpson of the United States or Teilhard de Chardin could be included. But Simpson is less important and ethics comprises a small part of his evolutionary writing. Teilhard is another matter. His ethic can be summarized in the "love" which is ever present in all evolution, but comes in crescendo force in the last chapter of The Phenomenon of Man. But, Teilhard is not really writing of ethics per se. He is more the philosophical biologist cum poet, directing occasional attention to the ethical problem. It was decided to omit him on that basis, as well as the overwhelming volume of writing which has been done on Teilhard and his work.

(1) Sir Julian Huxley

Sir Julian's ethics are in contrast to those of his grandfather, Thomas H. Huxley who was a noted biologist, Darwinian, and sometime philosopher of the late nineteenth century. Sir Julian himself puts it this way, as in Evolution and Ethics,[208] where he joins the Romanes Lecture

[208] Huxley, T. H. & Julian, Evolution and Ethics: 1893 - 1943 (London: The Pilot Press Ltd., 1947)

of T. H. Huxley in 1894, to his own lecture some fifty years later.

The simple theme of the first Romanes Lecture was "Evolution against Ethics."[209] T. H. Huxley probably held a different attitude formerly,[210] but by 1893 he concluded that there were no ethics of evolution. The cosmic process furnished no guide for morality.

> Cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and evil tendencies of man may have come about, but in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before.[211]

In the Romanes Lecture, T. H. Huxley criticized those who seek to base ethics on evolution, for although an evolution of "ethical acts" can be traced in the process, so as well can the unethical. "There is, so far, as much natural sanction for one as for the other."[212]

But T. H. Huxley did not stop there. His understanding of the evolutionary process revealed "Man" as the recipient of the beastliness of nature's struggles.

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[209] For a more complete description, see T. H. Huxley, Evolution and Ethics and Other Essays (London: The Macmillan Co., 1895); or Man's Place in Nature and Other Essays (London: James Dent & Co. - Everyman's Library, no date but circa 1900). For a brief, but accurate summary of T. H. Huxley, see Ritter's Darwin and the Golden Rule, pp. 162 ff.

[210] See Gertrude Himmelfarb, Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution (London: Chatto & Windus, 1959), pp. 332 ff., esp. regarding the part that social cooperation played in the development of man.

[211] Huxley, T. H. & Julian, Evolution and Ethics, p.80

[212] Ibid., p. 80

If anything, evolution taught us to go against what had succeeded in the past. Man, the elder Huxley taught, became successful throughout his savage state by relying on those qualities which he shared with the ape and the tiger: including "his physical organization, his cunning, his ruthless and ferocious destructiveness when his anger is roused by opposition."[213]

> After the manner of successful persons, civilized man would gladly kick down the ladder by which he has climbed. He would only be too pleased to see the "ape and tiger" die.[214]

But they remain alive, said T. H. Huxley, to plague the attempts of man at a truly civilized life, adding "pain and griefs innumerable and immeasurably great, to those which the cosmic process necessarily brings on the mere animal."[215]

These inherited promptings, he said, man now labels as "sins," and he punishes the acts which spring from them. In the end:

> Whatever differences of opinion may exist among the experts, there is a general consensus that the ape and tiger methods of the struggle for existence are not reconcilable with sound ethical principles.[216]

The laws of morality are the necessary restraints which man has had to put on the conditions of the continuing struggle. Consequently, thought T. H. Huxley, ethics is opposed to evolution.

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[213] Ibid., p. 63

[214] Ibid., pp. 63-64

[215] Ibid., p. 64

[216] Ibid.

With grand-filial affection in acknowledging his grandfather's contribution to the subject, Sir Julian comes to the subject with a different emphasis. "For T. H. Huxley," Julian writes, "there was a fundamental contradiction between the ethical process and the cosmic."[217] The trouble was that by "ethical process" T. H. meant "the universalist ethics of the Victorian enlightenment, bred by nineteen century humanitarianism out of traditional Christian ethics," and in Thomas Huxley personally, "tinged by a noble but stern puritanism and an almost fanatical devotion to scientific truth and its pursuit."[218]

The cosmic process, to T. H. Huxley, was "restricted almost entirely to biological evolution and to the selective struggle for existence on which it depends."[219] With the terms so limited, it was inevitable that the contradiction should occur. But it need not be so today as we are in a good position to enlarge our terms of reference and to eliminate the apparent contradiction.

Sir Julian does not abjudicate the argument over what the evolutionary process brings man in the specifics of "moral" or "immoral" impulses. T. H. Huxley and Herbert Spencer would be correct and incorrect. There is conflict in evolution; both "good" and "evil" belong.

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[217] Ibid., p. 105

[218] Ibid., p. 105

[219] Ibid.

And, drawing an analogy to the super-ego of the psychological unconscious, Julian Huxley writes: "Conflict is a necessary pre-requisite for ethics . . . its existence has determined some of the characteristics of the developing human mind."[220]

Specifically, says Julian, T. H. Huxley never explicitly enunciated what seems to be the fundamental point - "that man is inevitably subject to mental conflict as a normal function in his life." And further, that this contradiction is the necessary basis or ground on which conscience, the moral sense of man, and our systems of ethics grow and develop."[221]

> Today, the contradiction can, I believe, be resolved - on the one hand by extending the concept of evolution both backward into the inorganic and forward into the human domain, and, on the other by considering ethics not as a body of fixed principles, but as a product of evolution, and itself evolving.[222]

In developing his theory, Sir Julian turns to "psycho-social evolution" - his specific phrase for the evolution of man as man.

> We must acknowledge that the greatest change since 1893 in our attitude towards the great problems of ethics has been due to the new facts and the new approach provided by modern psychology, and that in turn, owes its rise to the genius of Freud.[223]

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[220] Ibid., p. 2

[221] Ibid., p. 2

[222] Ibid., p. 105

[223] Ibid., p. 25

To understand Huxley, we must understand that the whole occurrence of "psycho-social evolution," i.e., the interaction of hereditary and environmental influences form his "Evolutionary Ethics."

It is with Freud in particular that Huxley elaborates his ethic. Not that Freud is without failure for, Huxley writes, Freud's

> primitive and absolutist ethics, based on non-rational and unconscious mental processes, inevitably tend to an undue restriction of his human activities . . . To arrive at a constructive and truly humanistic ethics, he needs to liberate these forces from their unconscious grappling.[224]

But if Freud had buried ethics too deeply in the unconscious mental process, he had also discovered the origin of ethical ideals.

> These discoveries of modern psychology . . . have finally put out of court all purely intuitive theories. . . . The child's intuitions as to what is right and wrong are derived from its environment, largely mediated through its mother.[225]

The normal infant develops a "forerunner for the moral stiffening of adult ethics," in what Freud called the super-ego, and what Huxley prefers to call "the proto-ethical system."[226] It arises in the conflict of the "unregulated impulses with which the infant is endowed." As conflict is important to the development of a species in evolution, so it is also essential to the development of ethics in man.

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[224] Ibid., pp 111-12

[225] Ibid., p. 109

[226] Ibid., p. 107

Ethical judgments will thus be relative, writes Huxley, relative to the particular individual and his environment; for he writes:

> This at once implies a relativity of ethics. Individual ethics develop, social ethics evolve. And the solution of ethical systems and standards shows a broad correlation with that of the societies in which they flourish.[227]

At first, there does not appear to be any external standard for measuring the validity of morality. Huxley's question back in the beginning paragraph of the book is a good one:

> Is there any external standard for morals? Any touchstone by which goodness may be recognized, any yardstick by which it may be measured? Does there exist any natural foundation on which our human super-structure of right and wrong may safely rest, any cosmic sanction for ethics?[228]

His answer is that he has found "the external standard"; and there is, to him a natural foundation underlying it.

This then, is the critical point for understanding Julian Huxley's evolutionary ethic: "The evolutionary trend provides us with the clue for ethics." In it we find the "yardstick," the "touchstone," and any other measuring device we need. Our ethics should help to forward the progress which evolution has made toward several important characteristics. Progress, or what we can rightly call "progress," consists in the capacity to

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[227] Ibid., p. 115

[228] Ibid., p. 1

attain a higher degree of organization, but without closing the door to further advance." Progress is all-round biological improvement: Man is the latest dominant type to be evolved, and this being so, we are justified in calling the trends which have led to his development progressive.[229] Huxley does not believe in a view of evolutionary progress, but "we can discern a direction - the line of evolutionary progress."[230] The actual trends, in a most general order, are:

> Increase of control, increase of independence, increase of internal co-ordination; increase of knowledge, of means for co-ordinating knowledge, of elaborateness and intensity of feeling.[231]

Once found, these abilities are the criteria by which the progress of evolution is judged.

And what ethics and moral conclusions does that lead us to? Huxley's answer is his "Evolutionary Humanism." In Essays of a Humanist, he enumerates the four major tenets of this particular humanism:[232]

> (a) Though biological evolution operates by a purely quantitative mechanism, in the shape of natural selection, it results in qualitative improvement of actual organisms.
>
> (b) That increase of knowledge or awareness, and improvement in its organization, have been the basis

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[229] Julian Huxley, Evolution: The Modern Synthesis (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd, 1942), p. 566

[230] Ibid., p. 576

[231] Ibid., pp. 576-77

[232] Huxley, Essays of Humanist, pp. 10-11

> of a persistent trend towards real advance in biological evolution.
>
> (c) The study of trends or directional processes . . . is of the greatest importance, both in itself and as a guide to further advance. . . . In psycho-social evolution they must be studied from the functional point of view.
>
> (d) The present is largely a crisis of convergence - a convergence of human nations, cultures, and populations . . . of the branches of science, and of conflicting ideas and values demanding to be reconciled and integrated into some new evolutionary and humanistic system.

In psycho-social evolution, man can impose some control on the evolutionary process.

> After his emergence onto life's stage, it became possible to introduce faith, courage, love and truth, goodness - in a word, moral purpose - into evolution.[233]

Man represents the "culmination of that process of organic evolution which has been proceeding on this planet for over a thousand million years."[234] Evolution presently is primarily cultural, and primarily in man's control. He is "no longer supported and steered by instincts, but he can use his conscious thoughts as organs of psycho-social evolutionary direction."[235] The selective mechanism which determines what elements shall be incorporated and what rejected in the systems of traditions, "is primarily psychological (or mental), involving human awareness instead of human genes."[236] By means of his conscious

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[233] Huxley, T. H. & Julian, Evolution and Ethics, p.133

[234] Huxley, Uniqueness of Man, p. 32

[235] Julian Huxley, The Humanist Frame (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1961), p. 20

[236] Huxley, Essays of Humanist, p. 37

reason, man can substitute less wasteful and less cruel methods of change than those of natural selection.

> The central belief of Evolutionary Humanism is that existence can be improved, that vast untrapped possibilities can be increasingly realized, that greater fulfillment can replace frustration.[237]

If that were not so, there would be little point to project any type of ethical system or directives. No one could choose to follow it anyway.

The specific morals Huxley derives out of this theoretical approach are widely known. For the past forty years he has projected his favorite ideas in many books and lectures. They are best condensed in The Humanist Frame. There he writes of the "huge monsters in our evolutionary path."[238] These must be fought and defeated before progress can continue. Some of them are: the threat of super-scientific war; nuclear, chemical and biological; the threat of overpopulation; the rise and appeal of Communist ideology; the exploitation of natural resources; the erosion of the world's cultural variety; our general preoccupation with means rather than ends, with technology and quantity rather than creativity and quality; and the Revolution of Expectation, caused by the widening gap between the rich and poor nations of the world.

> They are all symptoms of a new evolutionary situation; and this can only be successfully met in the light and with the aid of a new organization of thought

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[237] Huxley, Humanist Frame, p. 48

[238] Ibid., pp. 21-22

> and belief, a new dominant pattern of ideas relevant to the new situation.[239]

Art is "good," for it creates significance. Science is "good," for it increases both comprehension and control. Religion is "good," for it keeps alive "man's sense of wonder, strangeness, and challenge." And finally:

> Our new organization of thought . . . must grow . . . in the light of our new evolutionary vision. So . . . it must be evolutionary, that is to say, it must help us to think in terms of an overriding process of change . . . instead of the rigid frame of fixed dogma.[240]

At first sight it appears that he has found some objective standard of ethics: as Anthony Quinton once condensed it to this simple injunction: "Keep Evolution Going!"[241] Actually, he has not. To support his natural evolutionary ethic, Huxley has but chosen a set of more or less commonly agreed and developing ethical ideas of the twentieth century Western World. His "higher values" are descriptions of what he finds there, and then the process of natural selection and psycho-social evolution are used to give them respectable non-religious support.

The important ends of a man's life should include the enjoyment of beauty, increased comprehension, and a more assured sense of the significance, the preservation of wonder and delight; fine scenery and unspoiled nature,

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[239] Ibid., p. 21

[240] Ibid., p. 22

[241] Quinton, Biology and Personality, p. 119

inner peace and harmony are active ethical values.[242]

> Nations . . . are remembered not for their wealth or comforts or technologies, but for their great buildings and works of art, their achievements in science or law or political philosophy, their success in liberating human life from the shackles of fear and ignorance.[243]

The list sounds familiar. For the most part these are the things one can admire and might expect to hear from any well-educated, cultured, non-Communist British biologist of the twentieth century, whether he believed in evolutionary ethics, or Natural Selection, or Winston Churchill. If Grandfather Huxley was too puritanical, and tied too closely to the general opinions of the Victorian Age (as Julian earlier commented), his grandson has hardly set himself free from his own.

What is certain is that Huxley has not shown us the way in which evolution provides the rules, or gives them final sanction. Sir Julian interprets them to such meaning, but mainly because these moral recommendations are his responses to problems of the modern world. He reinforces his natural ethics with non-natural ideals:

> An ethical theory that requires this sort of reinforcement, however much evolutionary material it makes use of, is not really an evolutionary ethic at all.[244]

It is a well worked and impressive example of selecting one's own material to support an assumed ethical end. As

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[242] Huxley, Humanist Frame, pp. 25-26

[243] Ibid., p. 25

[244] Quinton, Biology and Personality, p. 119

Professor Lillie once wrote of Spencer's ethic:

> In our examination of Spencer's theory we have seen that he certainly introduced the notion of ends again and again in his evolutionary ethics. Good conduct for him is not merely conduct at a later stage in the course of evolution; it is conduct which leads to longer life or to fuller life, or to a surplus of pleasantness.[245]

In Huxley's case, it would lead to world peace and brotherhood and an increase in culture. But it is not the discovery of "the good."

The evolutionary process has of course brought them, along with many other things. But if evolution teaches us that brotherhood and cooperative enterprises work; what of the violence and war and hatred, which are also present in the modern stage of evolutionary progress? We need some external criterion by which to judge them as well.

In his introduction to the English translation of the Phenomenon of Man, Huxley admits that his evolutionary ethics are "inadequate."[246] We will take him at his word. It is precisely at the point where some relationship between ethics and evolution is called for, that the inadequacy is most apparent. Dobzhansky has pinned the point down quite firmly when he objected that:

> No theory of evolutionary ethics can be acceptable unless it gives a satisfactory explanation of just why the promotion of evolutionary development must be regarded as the summum bonum . . . Despite any exhortations to the contrary, man will not permanently deny

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[245] William Lillie, An Introduction to Ethics (New York: Barnes and Noble, University Paperbacks, first pub. 1948, reprinted 1963), p. 188

[246] Teilhard de Chardin, Phenomenon of Man, p. 12

himself the right to question the wisdom of anything, including the wisdom of his evolutionary direction.[247]

Seen that way, Huxley fails, even on his own terms. The famous refutation by G. E. Moore of the "naturalistic fallacy," which we mentioned earlier, although misdirected in some other cases, could be applied at this point to Julian Huxley's evolutionary ethic.

For Huxley, either the process itself is "good"; or it brings us to the "good" we already have. If we must use our existing ethical notions to support the natural ethic, we are no further ahead than before. Huxley does not succeed in describing the intricacy of the way in which man's ethical activity is related to the evolutionary mechanism. It is a notable failing, and leads us to reject his theoretical framework for approaching ethics.

But, we conclude on an affirmative note. Huxley is allied with Christian ethics at many points of practice. He is at one with many of the ends that we, too, have selected from the cultural milieu. To pretend that as Christians we are exempt from the cultural setting in which we make our ethical judgments, or from the individual psychological background, would be untrue. As there is an acknowledged change in the ethics of the two generations of Huxleys, so we can note a change within the ethics of the Christian Church of the same periods. Our "recommended morality"; and far more acutely, our practiced

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[247] Dobzhansky, quoted by Waddington in Ethical Animal, p. 176

morality, in the late Victorian Era, was vastly different from the present. Both in the unofficial activity of the majority of Christians, but also in the "official" publications of ethics (save perhaps the Roman Catholic pronouncements on birth control) we can note a steady change: sometimes gradual and sometimes abrupt. We need look no further than the social gospel in the United States, and its implications for a Christian society; or to the Sex and Morality[248] Report of the British Council of Churches published a few years ago.

We, too, are the children of our time: as was Joshua in his raids on the promised land, where women and children were exterminated in the name of the Lord; as also is Julian Huxley.

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[248] Sex and Morality, British Council of Churches Report (London: SCM Press, October, 1966)

(2) Professor C. H. Waddington

A second modern evolutionary ethic is that of Professor Conrad Hall Waddington. His argument was introduced in Science and Ethics,[249] a book which he edited in 1941; it also appears briefly in The Nature of Life;[250] but it is fully developed in The Ethical Animal.[251] There Waddington presents an ethic which, while different from all the earlier attempts, is based on the evolutionary process.

At some points it is similar to Huxley:

> It has often been argued that the existence, both within the sub-human animal world, and in the world of mankind, of general patterns of change which merit the title of evolutionary progress, provides us with an inspiration which guide mankind's ethical strivings. One of the most prominent advocates of this type of ethical humanism at the present day is Julian Huxley. A similar argument has also been put forward from a more definitely religious point of view by Teilhard de Chardin. I personally agree very largely with their conclusions.[252]

Huxley and Waddington are similar in that neither is involved in the "old evolutionary ethics" controversy over whether social cooperation or struggle is the predominant force in the rise of man.

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[249] C. H. Waddington, Science and Ethics (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1942)

[250] Waddington, Nature of Life

[251] Waddington, Ethical Animal

[252] Waddington, Nature of Life, p. 108

> With the realization that Darwinian "fitness" is a very special concept relating to the leaving of offspring and not to any other form of success within the individual's own lifetime, the basis for this theory of Social Darwinism disappeared. It can now be regarded as no more than a temporary aberration in the history of thought.[253]

Huxley and Waddington also share the concept of evolution as extended to include the evolution of man as man. Huxley called this "psycho-social" evolution. Waddington calls it "socio-genetic transmission." They agree that since the appearance of man, evolution is no longer controlled significantly by evolutionary influences:

> but in relation to the general processes of human advance they cannot be regarded as more than suggestive. This is so because human advance does not take place only, or even mainly, by means of biological evolution.
>
> Biological evolution has in mankind been reduced to the relative unimportance by the development of a new, and characteristically human method of advance.[254]

Critical to both Huxley and Waddington is the further agreement on the belief in evolutionary progress and direction. "The most important lesson to be learnt by man from the consideration of evolution," arises (writes Waddington) not by the methods by which evolution has been brought about, "but from the nature of the results which it has achieved."[255] What we have now is important, not what we thought we had along the way. Just as the evolutionary processes will lead to an improvement in carrying

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[253] Ibid., p. 97

[254] Ibid., p. 98

[255] Ibid., p. 102

out a particular task, so we may expect them to produce improved organisms.

> This is, in fact, what has happened; and it is improvement in respect of finding some way of exploiting the environment to make a living that justifies the use of the phrase "evolutionary progress."[256]

"Progress" involves the movement toward "independence from the environment" and the ability to control the environment," or as Waddington rephrases it: "utilizing the environmental variables."[257] To Waddington "direction" and "progress" in their evolutionary settings, are not meant to convey the ordinary meanings of these words, and also not the same meaning as Huxley's.

> If . . . one says, as Herbert Spencer did and probably Julian Huxley also, that the evolutionary progress is good and therefore the good can be defined by means of evolutionary progress, the argument does not escape from the imputation of being a vicious circle.[258]

Nevertheless, evolutionary direction and progress, as defined in the relationship which the organism has to its surrounding environment, are "an inevitable consequence of the nature of the process and the organism involved in it." That is critical to the further development of Waddington's argument:

> The thesis I have proposed has involved the assumption that it is possible to discern in the results of evolution some general over-all direction

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[256] Ibid., pp. 105-106

[257] Waddington, Ethical Animal, p. 136

[258] Ibid., p. 80

of change which can truly be regarded as a special direction.[259]

Waddington handles those who do not believe that evolution can be characterized by any type of direction or "progress." To those who ask why we should consider ourselves better than the worms, he parries with a short answer similar to Dr. Johnson's, who when querried on the reality of the external world, simply kicked his foot against a stone: Waddington writes: "We might say that we will take seriously the worm's claim to be our equals when the worms come and present it, but not before."[260]

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Waddington then departs from the argument of Julian Huxley, and there are important differences in the two "systems." While Huxley is attempting to demonstrate "a connection between the evolutionary process and man's ethical feelings," stressing that natural selection has provided man with values, Waddington (as Dobzhansky also noted) writes of "the capacity to acquire ethics and values." The clearest difference between the two approaches to ethics is just there. Waddington refers his ethical discussion directly to the way in which man's ethical ideas are related to the process. Julian Huxley does not. Huxley seems to be content with discovering

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[259]Ibid., p. 65

[260]Waddington, Nature of Life, p. 104

the direction of evolution, and enjoining us to follow it. Waddington ties it directly to his understanding of the way socio-genetic transmission works. To him, principles do not arise automatically in the process. Nor does the existence of any naturally selected form of action mean that it in time becomes the "good." We find only the framework within which we can discuss and evaluate ethical systems, especially as we look to the socio-genetic transmission of ethical-acceptance tendencies. The thesis of his major book on the subjectis that such a framework "is to be found in a consideration of animal and human evolution."[261]

In The Ethical Animal Waddington condenses his "ethic" into an outline of the four main points in understanding the framework "within which our ethical beliefs should be evaluated and criticized":

(a) "Socio-genetic" transmission of information has become the mechanism on which human evolution mainly depends.

(b) It can operate only because the psychological development of man is such that the newborn baby becomes moulded into a creature which is ready to accept the transmitted information.

(c) There is "general evolutionary direction" which has a philosophical status similar to that of healthy growth in nature.

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[261] Waddington, Ethical Animal, p. 23

(d) Any particular set of ethical beliefs can be meaningfully judged according to their efficacy in furthering this general evolutionary direction.[262]

In the time of recorded human history we detect only slight indications of biological evolution but there is overwhelming evidence of changes in human culture. To Waddington, the cultural alterations are not undirectional, any more than were the changes produced by biological evolution prior to man. As humans, we have what in effect amounts to "a new mode of heredity transmission." True, it cannot bring a new variation in the structure of our genes, and it does not principally affect biological changes:

> but it can transmit conceptual knowledge, beliefs, feelings, aesthetic creations and other mental phenomena. . . . It may be referred to as the cultural system.[263]

With the advent of the cultural system came the possibility, or as Waddington would prefer it, borrowing half-a-point from Darwin: The necessity of ethical considerations. Man alone is the ethical animal. The same process in which he developed also brought the necessity of ethical reflection and ethical acts. "The existence of ethical beliefs is a necessary part of the human evolutionary system."[264]

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[262] Ibid., p. 7

[263] Ibid., p. 102

[264] Ibid., p. 173

So far as man's evolution is carried on by his socio-genetic system - and in effect it is so in major part - the fact that he is an ethicizing being is an essential cogwheel in the whole machine.[265]

Waddington then continues his analogy with reference to biological evolution. As biological "information" is transferred through the gametes in the genetic make-up of each new individual, so in human evolution (the socio-genetic process) there must be a similar way in which the transmitted information will be received, or at least received with enough regularity to become a part of the species. This takes place because (in what Waddington calls the most crucial step in the whole chain of the argument) the development of the newborn child into an authority acceptor, involves "the formation within his mind of some mental factors which carry authority." These are formed in the interaction of his innate potentialities, one of which is the intrinsic potentiality for ethicizing, with the environmental factors which he encounters.

An "authority-bearing system is essential within the mind if the infant is to become a recipient for socially transmitted information."[266] Then, in the psychological process described by Freud and Piaget: that "internal force" and the "external circumstances" form

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[265] Ibid., p. 29

[266] Ibid., p. 157

the setting in which the newborn infant becomes an ethicizing being. The authority required to make socio-genetic transmission possible at all, and the authority which is involved in the ensuing development of ethical activity, are two aspects of one and the same type of mental functioning.

The mechanism which has actually been produced during the evolution of mankind is one in which these two aspects of authority are indissolubly connected.[267] Man is the sort of creature who goes in for having ideas of right and wrong as an essential part of his make-up. To Waddington, man has what Lack called "a psychological (biological) compulsion to form ethical concepts."[268] "The basic nature of our ethical character is, then, that it is part of our special human or socio-genetic type of cultural heredity mechanism."[269] (Underlines ours)

So much for the mechanism of authority. Once we ascertain the general character of human evolution, we should then inquire of any ethical belief or action "how effective it is in mediating this empirically ascertained course of evolutionary change?" Then, by considering the present process as it is repeated in each human individual, we can find a criterion for judging ethics and ethical behaviour: in short, by whether they suit both the socio-

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[267] Waddington, Nature of Life, p. 109

[268] Lack, Evolutionary Theory, p. 97

[269] Waddington, Nature of Life, p. 110

genetic transmission of information, and whether they will assist the evolutionary direction of man.

> As we judge genetic changes by whether they are suitable to carry forward evolutionary progress on the biological level, so we can judge various different types of ethical belief according to whether they seem likely to carry forward human evolution.[270]

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Waddington's argument, while carefully presented, is complex. One possible way to simplify it should be to turn to the ethics which follow, to the practical aspects of the theory. Granted, he is not advocating a system of ethics and a set of moral rules for man to follow. His "system" is only a broad general criterion by which other systems of ethics can be judged. It is more a theory on the origin of ethics itself. But he does write that evolution has led us toward a "richness of experience." We should encourage the forward progress of the human evolutionary scene. We should increase communication between cultures, respecting the diversity of cultures throughout the world. Our major ethical task is the prevention of war, mainly because these days, a major war could endanger the process itself and the socio-genetic transmission of ethics which goes with it. We must also work out creative ways to use our leisure and appreciate the part science plays in the world (the latter a comment from an educator who feels too much emphasis has been placed on the arts to the detriment of science.)

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[270] Ibid., p. 110

While there is no single ethical ideal which would be universal, our ethics should always be on a large scale: "not unduly restricting," and enlarging our scope of social heritage. The ethical problem can no longer be phrased in terms of personal relationships alone. What each of us does in the individual acts of our lives is important, perhaps critical, in the personal relationships and personal character development. But what happens to the social, political, and economic relationships of the large groups of nations, affects the entire future of the world and man. "An ideal, to be worthy of belief, should be on a large scale."[271] These are the kinds of things which the evolutionary ethic requires, and all are acceptable.

But he has not succeeded in solving the ethical problem. And even though that criticism can be leveled against many others who work in the subject matter of ethics and morals, it is yet a significant failing. The basic problem with Waddington is that he allows for no criterion external to the natural world and the natural understanding of the human ethical animal.

In The Ethical Animal, Waddington exempts himself from the criticism that he has attempted to derive the criteria for ethics solely from the natural history of the world, although he admits that it is a failure of Julian Huxley. But ultimately, he is caught in the same

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[271] Waddington, Ethical Animal, p. 195

net. It is true that he does not fabricate a scientific system out of his individual beliefs; nor does he call evolutionary promptings to certain kinds of behaviour "goods"; but the structure of his ethical approach depends on the existence of "goods" in the evolutionary direction of the biological and socio-genetic development.

In Science and Ethics he wrote that "We must accept the direction of evolution as good, simply because it is good according to any realist definition of the concept." In The Ethical Animal, in answer to Raphael's criticism,[272] he explained that the "good" referred not to ideas considered good by any individual, but to the general criterion by which ethical beliefs may be judged.

> What would be wise for me to do and for what reasons? can be deduced from the answer to the question: "What has the world at large been doing in its history and for what reasons?"[273]

That is admittedly not an individual preference which determines ethical discussion and action; but the insistence that because it is a large number of individuals (even if Waddington would say that it is everyone who ever lived or is living now) does not change the fact that he is deriving ethical judgment by what is, or was. While he insists that he is referring to the socio-genetic system, by which the individual's willingness to accept direction and authority which is involved in the natural

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[272] Raphael, Century of Darwin, chapter 15, p. 347 ff. There is also detailed criticism of Waddington in Lack's Evolutionary Theory, chapters 9, 10 and Quinton's Biology and Personality, chapter 8.

[273] Waddington, Ethical Animal, p. 58

equipment of the man, that is also using "good" to mean the best that we can transmit, and the best procedures that nature has collected to transmit it.

There is something meritorious in his work on ethics, because there is something important for us in the examination of both the evolution of ethics, and "Ethics and Evolution." The origin and development of human behaviour is an interesting and rewarding pursuit. Waddington is correct: we cannot hope to understand ourselves and our actions if we ignore the process which brought them about. But equally, we cannot end there without ignoring the other essential aspect of ethics: that which is beyond the natural.

It is fair to conclude with Waddington that it is desirable both to continue the life process, and to continue those agreed "goods," which it has taught. But with Quinton we say:

> that the case for the primacy of biological efficiency amongst the set of technical values has not been made out. That it is a good cannot seriously be questioned. What has not been shown is that it is the good.[274]

As H. P. Owen sums up both Waddington and Huxley with the caution that:

> Morality can be derived from evolution only if evolution is read in the light of preconceived moral terms. . . . The direction which the evolutionary process takes - turns out to be what is in accordance with those moral standards that we independently possess. The evolutionists argument is circular.[275]

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[274] Quinton, Biology and Personality, p. 121

[275] H. P. Owen, The Moral Argument for Christian Theism (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1965), p. 15

B. Evolution and Behaviour

Some Initial Investigations

1. General and Territoriality

Although we conclude that the evolutionary ethic cannot provide us with an ethical system, we are yet working out the thesis that an evolutionary study of ethics is a requirement for the Christian moralist. Professor Thorpe noted that while the fundamental ideas of morals are not directly involved, still "much of ethics can be derived from the evolutionary process."[276] It is that "much" of ethics which concerns us now.

Professor Waddington is helpful in setting out a general principle at which our investigation of ethical problems can begin. It derives from his concept of the "socio-genetic" transmission of information from one generation to the next, where he concluded that "the capacity to acquire ethics," as the ability to think itself, is a species characteristic of man.[277] Man's power of conscious thought is a species characteristic which was instrumental in his ability to cope with, and transcend his immediate environment. It was "favored" by

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[276] Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, p. 137

[277] See "A Naturalistic View of Mind," Y. H. Krikorian, chapter 11, Naturalism and the Human Spirit (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949, fourth printing), pp. 242 ff.

natural selection, or it would not have survived. As J. B. Habgood noted in another sense, "The role of consciousness cannot be irrelevant in evolution, otherwise conscious creatures would never have evolved."[278] Ultimately, our thought, and in particular ethical thoughts, may be God-given in creation, but only in the Teilhardian sense that everything which presently exists was there potentially in the primordial stuff of the universe. Its gradual unfolding takes place in the evolutionary developments we have previously discussed. How the developing man acted in what we now call ethical situations, e.g., social behaviour, sexuality or violence, was instrumental in the kind of man who developed.

It is especially relevant as we move from ethical theory into the practical matters with which Christian morals have to deal. There we will shift our attention from the more theoretical work of philosophical biology to the practical work of the ethologists who study animal and human behaviour.

Professor Thorpe is helpful in opening up this aspect of our study:

> Biology tends to blur many of the sharp distinctions which find their expression in everyday language. This seems to me to be true, whether we are dealing with the nature of life, the development of consciousness, the development of aesthetic appreciation and of moral values.[279]

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[278] Habgood, Religion and Science, p. 68

[279] W. H. Thorpe, Biology, Psychology and Belief (Cambridge: University Press, 1961), p. 48

In the concluding part of Science, Man and Morals, Thorpe brings his ethological studies directly to bear on some of the most difficult ethical problems facing contemporary man.[280] His treatment of pre-marital intercourse, homosexuality, aggression, war, etc., are necessarily brief and inconclusive. But it augurs well for much additional study along these lines, and is a good introduction to how critical that study can be.

Our subject has been attracting much popular attention and we should note in passing that a few of the writers in this field are widely read. When we are dealing with Teilhard or Konrad Lorenz, it is not much of a problem; for although they too are popular writers, the scientific base of their work is usually well founded and they help to make the subject intelligible to a large number of interested readers. It is an important task. But when we look to Desmond Morris, e.g., The Naked Ape,[281] which plays on the sexual aspect of the human animal; we find that a qualified authority in zoology, who studied with Niko Tinbergen and has a doctorate in Animal Behaviour from Oxford, has oversimplified the topic. We can go as far as Arthur Koestler in recommending that the book be read by readers who are "able to savour its wealth of information without swallowing all of its conclusions."[282]

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[280]See esp. chapter 4, "Animal Societies and the Development of Ethics," pp. 93 ff.

[281]Desmond Morris, The Naked Ape (London: Johnathan Cape, 1967)

[282]Arthur Koestler's review in THE OBSERVER,

Also notable in this group of popular writers is the American journalist-dramatist and sometime scientist, Robert Ardrey. African Genesis[283] and The Territorial Imperative[284] do deal with important questions in this field; but we can ultimately set Ardrey aside from the body of this research.[285] Dobzhansky's firm rebuke of his dramatic organization and emphasis puts Ardrey in proper perspective:

> Ardrey appears to see no particular virtue in humility, and if he understands the difference between "the record of facts" and "flights of fancy," he keeps it well hidden in his book.[286]

Ardrey's flights of fancy can be briefly summarized under two headings: Animal Instinct in Man, and Human Territorial Behaviour; both of which are important aspects of our discussion, but neither receives a scholarly study with Mr. Ardrey.

Ardrey overlooks the fact that he is dealing with man, whose psycho-social evolution has been of a nature

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October 15, 1967. Incidentally Koestler is himself a prolific and popular writer on the biological nature of man. See esp. his recent book The Ghost in the Machine (London: Hutchinson and Company, 1967)

[283]Robert Ardrey, African Genesis (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1963)

[284]Robert Ardrey, The Territorial Imperative (New York: The Atheneum Publishers, 1966)

[285]There is a nostalgia in this statement. It was Ardrey's first book on this subject that initially aroused my interest in the possibilities of researching this thesis.

[286]Th. Dobzhansky, Animal Behaviour (Review - 1967), p. 393 - Book Review, Robert Ardrey's Territorial Imperative and Konrad Lorenz' On Aggression; vol. 15, parts 2 & 3; April/July, 1967

different from other organisms.[287] To suggest that man is driven by the biology of behaviour, and to ignore the culture which has molded him as much as he molds it, is to ignore a most obvious and important aspect of human behaviour.

Ardrey's other abuse of zoological information is found in his application of territorial behaviour to man. Man, says Ardrey, is a territorial animal, "as is a mocking bird singing in the clear California night."[288] Our territorial behaviour, he says, is as much a mark of our species as is our bone structure or the development of the human brain. Territoriality, says Ardrey, is the explanation. Birds fight over territory then win the affection of their mates. Unpropertied males get no partners. Ugandan kobs divide up their territorial space into sub-territories and await the female kobs, who, says Ardrey and kob authority Helmut Bruechner, select a mate not by his worth, far less his looks, but by the worth and the look of his territory.[289] Male sticklebacks dig out a territorial nest on the sandy bottom of some shallow water. Eels swim thousands of miles to breed in the exact same Sargasso Sea territory where they all were born. And homing pigeons always come

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[287] deBeer, Evolution, p. 21

[288] Ardrey, Territorial Imperative, p. 5

[289] Ibid., p. 45. Ardrey's sense of humour in these analogies is delightful, however inappropriate they are in scientific analogy to human beings.

home. Territoriality, says Ardrey, is the basic mechanism of animal behaviour.

And concludes Ardrey, since man is a result of the evolutionary process, territoriality is a chief mechanism of his behaviour and the basis of a natural biological morality.[290] The conclusion is misleading.

Territorial behaviour is important to students of animal behaviour, and occasionally there is some confirmation of the idea that it may have important consequences in man. Professor H. P. Hediger, e.g., writes:

> It can be assumed that the natural history of territoriality in the animal kingdom represents the introduction to the first chapter of the history of property in mankind. A piece of land or a section of space was most probably the very first thing that living beings took possession of, and that they defended even against their own kind.[291]

Others have shared the concern. Henry Eliot Howard, who published Territory in Bird Life[292] in 1920, was the first to notice the phenomenon in detail. Men such as C. R. Carpenter and S. Zuckerman in non-human primates; G. W. Bradt and K. Gordon with rodents; M. M. Nice also with bird life, and many others are agreed on its importance in animal behaviour.[293] Sir Arthur Keith also writes:

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[290] Ibid., p. 79

[291] H. P. Hediger, "The Evolution of Territorial Behaviour" in S. L. Washburn's Social Life of Early Man (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd, 1962), p. 34

[292] Henry E. Howard, Territory in Bird Life (N.Y.: Athenenum Press (Reprinted) 1964; 1st ed. 1920)

[293] A good review of the subject is found in Behaviour and Evolution, chapter 11, "Territoriality: A Review of Concepts and Problems"

> Every tribe, no matter how primitive or how small it may be, claims to occupy and own a certain area of country, the frontiers of which are known by every tribesman. Tribesmen are bound to their native soil by a strong emotional bond; they regard its integrity as a sacred trust; if the life of the tribe is to continue, frontiers must be preserved.[294]

We should add that the importance of territoriality, and its possible implications for the behaviour of man, is part of the purpose in this research. But to elevate it to the controlling factor in man's present activity is something entirely different, not only premature, but almost certainly false.

In addition to our more general objection, we will note the continuing disagreement in ethology regarding the importance of territoriality in animals, and far more in its application to man. Dr. Davis, for example, warns of the danger in dwelling too long on any specific aspect of animal behaviour:

> The seeming universality of territorial behaviour may have blinded researchers to the possibility that some species lack territory completely. (It) is clear that territorial behaviour is not essential for the success of a species.[295]

And, continues Davis, there is another means of organizing animal populations which is equally known and equally valid - "that of social rank."

Examples of social rank are found throughout the animal kingdom: crayfish, crickets, dogfish, salmon, large

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[294]Keith, Essays on Evolution, p. 6

[295]David E. Davis, Integral Animal Behavior (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), p. 66

fish, reptiles, lizards, birds, roosters, hens, African antelope, moose, camels, and primates as well, order themselves in a rank of social dominance.[296] If we are to borrow directly from observed animal behaviour, then we could also argue that a pecking order is natural for man, and draw the implications that captivated the social Darwinists: social rankings should stay the way they are, for that is what evolution teaches.

Barnett's reasoning on territoriality is an even clearer refutation to its application to humans. He concludes cautiously that for many species, territoriality appears to be important for:

> Crowding could result in over-use of essentials, especially food and shelter. A territory may also allow undisturbed coitus, and it could aid in the protection of the young. All these statements have to be hypothetical: there is no decisive experimental evidence to support them.[297]

But, even if we assume that it is important for all other species, there is a difficult problem to be overcome in applying it to humans. Comparisons are hazardous. While we can use the term "territory" for a "defended region,"

> Territorial behaviour in animals depends on systems of signals common to the whole of each species . . . By contrast, in man, the rules regarding property are culturally determined: each one of us has to learn them for his own group, in childhood; there is no pattern of signals or responses common to the whole species.[298]

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[296] Ibid., pp. 68-75

[297] Barnett, Instinct and Intelligence, p. 135

[298] Ibid., p. 108

All that can reasonably be said at present is that in many species a territorial behaviour exists, where the members of the species defend a certain section of property, or space, seemingly making it a matter of first importance. If it is a species characteristic of man at all, it must be grouped with all other behavioural tendencies which find expression in their existence in the human phase of evolution, where they exist in and are modified by the cultural environment which is characteristic of man.

2. Konrad Lorenz and Aggression

As a corrective to the mis-use of scientific material, we turn to the work of Dr. Konrad Lorenz, the well-known student of animal behaviour, whom Huxley once called "the founder of ethology."[299] In some of his popular works as well as in his more serious scientific writings, Lorenz is important for our discussion.

Lorenz begins his study of human behaviour in the belief that there are innate behavioural activities which man shares with the animal world as a result of the evolutionary process. He accepts that "instinctual behaviour"[300] is not only important in the behaviour of man, but that it takes its roots in the inherited genetic structure when man first became man.

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[299] Julian Huxley, introduction, On Aggression, p. vii, although we should note that Darwin's Expression of the Emotions in Animals and Men is the first book on the subject.

[300] In most instances we use the word "instinct" or the phrase "instinctual behaviour" in the general "dictionary definition" sense to mean "unreasoned tendency to specific reaction, behaviour, etc." In Learning and Instinct in Animals, Thorpe points out that the original Latin word implies "being driven from within" (p. 15). Its proper and distinct use in ethological science limits it to "patterns of behaviour which are not learned and are performed without foresight of the end." Precision in scientific language is of course essential, and where it applies scientifically we restrict its use to that meaning. But for our purposes, we use words like "drive," "innate tendency," "unlearned response," "requirement," etc., to mean the biological-physiological, hereditary needs of the organism, as opposed to psychological, social and environmental ones.

> It is no daring speculation to assume that the first human beings who really represented our own species, those of Cro-Magnon, had roughly the same instincts and natural inclinations as we have ourselves. Nor is it illegitimate to assume that the structure of their societies and their tribal warfare was roughly the same as can still be found in certain tribes of Papuans in Central New Guinea.[301]

The one "natural inclination" which Lorenz has discussed in great detail is that of aggression. The presence of aggressive behaviour in the world of animals is well documented and universally accepted. What is essential for our task is that we work from the observed presence of aggression into the questions of how it first arrived, how it worked in the animal world, and how it influences the behaviour of man. Lorenz reminds us that:

> . . . behavioural science really knows so much about the natural history of aggression that it does become possible to make statements about its causes and much of its malfunctioning in man. To achieve insight into the origin of a disease is by no means the same as to discover an effective therapy, but it is certainly one of the necessary conditions for that.[302]

The biological scientist, says Lorenz, cannot doubt that "intra-specific aggression is, in man, just as much of a spontaneous instinctive drive as in most other higher vertebrates."[303] Aggression preceded man in the evolutionary process. Prior to man it first arose in the important part which it played in individual survival.

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[301] Konrad Lorenz, On Aggression, translated by Marjorie Latzke (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1966), p. 215

[302] Ibid., p. 215

[303] Konrad Lorenz, "Ritualized Fighting," in The Natural History of Aggression, ed. Carthy and Ebling, p. 49

Later, aggression became ritualized and was redirected into other areas as evolution discovered a solution to the problem which overt aggression posed to the survival of the species as a group, "We know from many other observations that aggression, though evoked by one object, can easily be directed towards another."[304] In the evolution of vertebrates, and ultimately man, it worked toward the establishment of ritualized aggressive behaviour, which Lorenz develops further in the establishment of the roots of "bond behaviour." Lorenz defines bond behaviour as "the keeping together in space of two or more individuals by a set of responses which each of them selectively elicits in the other."[305] A protective evolutionary device which helps to insure that individual evolutionary development could give way to the selection of small groups (or families) came into being.

> We know that, in the evolution of vertebrates, the bond of personal love and friendship was the epoch-making invention created by the great constructors when it became necessary for two or more individuals of an aggressive species to live peacefully together. . . . We know that human society is built upon the foundation of this bond.[306]

But the bond is in part controlled by innate responses over which the human has no conscious control, at least not over the initial presence. Aggression is important in the

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[304] Ibid., p. 45

[305] Ibid., p. 47

[306] Lorenz, On Aggression, p. 258

development of man for while it can be redirected into other outlets which work for his continued initiative and progress, it also can work toward the establishment of pair bonding (personal love and friendship) which is necessary for the development of communal life and the care and education of the young.

In answer to "the widely held opinion, shared by some contemporary philosophers": that all human behaviour patterns which help the development of man and his society are dictated by "specifically human rational thought," Lorenz counters that the opinion is not only unfounded, but "the very opposite is true." We have received rich and noble endowments in the transfer of the complex range of social instinct from the animal kingdom to our own:

> Our pre-human ancestry gave and received friendship, were tender and kind to the young of their community; and under the right conditions gave their lives for their fellows.[307]

Lorenz then discusses at some length the question of why reasonable men behave so unreasonably. The one who was created a little lower than the angels, and who is crowned with glory and honour is, as the Old Testament also knew, capable of the worst sort of inglorious action. "All of these amazing paradoxes," writes Dr. Lorenz:

> find an unconstrained explanation, falling into place like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, if one assumes

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[307] Ibid., p. 212

> that human behaviour, far from being determined by reason and cultural tradition alone, is still subject to all the laws prevailing in all phylo-genetically adapted instinctive behaviour.[308]

Lorenz does not deny that cultural or rational conditioning occur. But they are important, not aside from innate behaviour, but because man is genetically constructed so that he needs to be complemented by culture - a larger expression of Waddington's point that ethics is also a "need" with man. The potential for cultural development is there at the inception, or it would never have developed at all.

> Contemporary man is by nature a being of culture. In other words, man's whole system of innate activities and reactions is phylo-genetically so constructed, so calculated by evolution, as to need to be complemented by cultural tradition.[309]

The logic of the relationship, to Lorenz, is clear. If one could come onto the human scene from outside the earth (from Mars, as Lorenz suggests), it seems entirely reasonable to guess that there would be no doubt that all of life belongs to the same life-line, and, that as it continues in development the continuation belongs to human behaviour and culture as well, the latter depending on the former both for its existence and its expression.

Not being Martians, and unable to extricate ourselves from our subjective involvement, we are likewise unable to examine the subject of our human behaviour without

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[308] Ibid., p. 204

[309] Ibid., p. 228

being personally committed to the conclusions. Yet we must make the attempt.

> If . . . humanity is so obviously powerless to stem the pathological disintegration of its social structure and if it behaves, as a whole, in no way more intelligently than any species of animals would under the same circumstances, this alarming state of affairs is largely due to that spiritual pride which prevents men from regarding themselves and their behaviour as parts of nature and as subject to its universal laws.[310]

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Lorenz introduces the topic, but there are two points at which we must reject his conclusions. The first is a general point: Lorenz's conclusions derive out of his conviction that man can be explained by his natural origin. Although this thesis clearly accepts that what man is and does can be examined from the evolutionary, or natural, point of view, we must repeat an earlier criticism that Lorenz has reduced man and his behaviour to a natural view alone. The perspective which allows one to view the ethical life of man from a point beyond its natural origin and cultural setting is missing in Lorenz. Cro-Magnon man probably did have the same "instincts and natural inclinations" as modern man; but the man which we see presently in creation is more than his instincts, his natural inclinations and his cultural setting. His existence is in debt to more than the genetic pool which has allowed him to develop as man.

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[310] Lorenz, "Ritualized Fighting", p. 50

But, second, there is another criticism which is more directly related to Lorenz; one which is also made by his fellow ethologist: S. A. Barnett. In a highly critical review of On Aggression,[311] Barnett concluded that Lorenz has misled his readers. "The crucial question," wrote Barnett, "is how the violence arises (in man). Lorenz believes that the question can be answered by studying patterns of behaviour . . . that are common to an entire animal species." But, says Barnett, Dr. Lorenz is confused because he fails to take account of the development of behaviour during the lifetime of each individual. Instinctual behaviour does not occur independently from the environment in which the individual organism develops. The emphasis in Barnett's criticism is on the individual organism, and not on the more general cultural influences on man. For Barnett there is no instinctual life for a species which can be recognized by the student. At the most, only the potential for certain types of behaviour can be said to be present, and these only as the individual life develops them in its individual environment.

Barnett, we should add, is opposed to Lorenz in a far larger area of subject matter than his review of On Aggression. In his own book, Instinct and Intelligence, he warns of the danger involved in comparing animal and

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[311] S. A. Barnett, Scientific American, Vol. 216; p. 136, 1967; Review of Konrad Lorenz/ On Aggression.

human behaviour: "such comparisons, especially when they entail a search for similarities, can easily lead to error, and it is useful to try to make the various sources of error explicit."[312] The answer of how we can control human behaviour 'is not to be found in the behaviour of other species." That approach leads to a "gross misinterpretation of animal behaviour," and "one may be led to think of human behaviour as fixed . . . and difficult to alter."[313]

While he provides a good balance for the enthusiasm of an ethologist like Lorenz, we must also point out that Barnett's objections are not entirely valid. Examining the sources of human behaviour does not necessarily lead to a "gross misinterpretation of animal behaviour" - for surely Dr. Lorenz has remained a careful student of animal experiments. It can also lead to a well-reasoned and useful approach to behavioural science - a point which Barnett himself well realizes in his book.[314] He does not ignore the implications which such studies have in approaching strictly human problems. Nor, also, must it lead to the conclusion that "human behaviour is fixed . . . and difficult to alter." Especially where there is a full awareness of the environmental factors of behaviour, such studies can help to expand our information and possibilities of control.

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[312]Barnett, Instinct and Intelligence, p. v.

[313]Ibid., p. 109

[314]See esp. Barnett's discussion of the social consequences and altruism arising out of his consideration of the early hunting habits and food sharing, p. 227

The ethological argument is not our main concern. That is better left for the professionals in that field. But we can better understand the emphasis which Lorenz is making if we look to another more technical book which he wrote: Evolution and the Modification of Behaviour. There Lorenz discusses the different attitudes to the concept of the "innate." The primary aim of this writing is to argue for the importance of innate factors in animal and human behaviour. One approach, that of behaviorist psychology, eliminates innate behavioural concepts entirely, for "innate behaviour" there "implies a mechanism which is independent of environment," and behavioural psychology insists that all behaviour is learned. But, replies Lorenz, "The assumption that learning 'enters into' every phylo-genetically adapted behavior mechanism is neither a logical necessity nor in any way supported by observational and experimental fact."[315]

Another approach, "taken by many English speaking modern ethologists," is also in error when it assumes that "innate and learned" are only two extremes of a continuum of gradation." No reason exists for assuming "that individually acquired information enters into every kind of behaviour."[316] And, while "innate" and "learned"

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[315]Konrad Lorenz, Evolution and the Modification of Behavior (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1966), p. 18

[316]Ibid., p. 29

are not mutually exclusive concepts, the recognition that there are innate responses in man is essential.

To deny that it exists (behaviourist psychology) or to blur its distinctive existence (some modern ethology) is to remove it from its essential place. Barnett's emphasis is in the other direction and no doubt, though unnamed, he is included in Lorenz's criticism of modern English-speaking ethology.

But, to come back to our point, we hold that Barnett is correct in his initial criticism of Lorenz. The direct analogies which Lorenz draws between the behaviour of jewel fish, sticklebacks, Chow dogs, eagles and jackdaws, all of which have been household pets of Lorenz and his obviously patient wife, are misleading.[317] We cannot reasonably say, nor should Lorenz, that because the aggressive love interplay takes place in a certain way among greylay geese (which prompted Koestler to quip that Lorenz has offered us an "anseromorphic view of man"), it follows that the same is true for the relationship of aggression and love in man.

> What he (Lorenz)seems to forget is that a species which is able to invent atomic weapons must have very unique and remarkable biological, as well as cultural, characteristics. The hope for non-extinction of mankind would be scant indeed, if it had to depend on natural selection making us biologically adapted to

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[317]Arthur Koestler, in his review of On Aggression, in The Observer (September 18, 1966) acknowledged that Lorenz is "on the side of the angels," but wondered how he ever got there!

> every new technological invention. In short, for many thousands of years mankind has been adapting its environment to its genes more often than its genes to its environment.[318]

Lorenz has overstated his point, but he retains his importance for our thesis. He alerts us to the necessity of continued examination of ethological studies insofar as they bear on the discussion of human behaviour. For we are part of that evolutionary process, and now partially conscious of what the process means.

Arising out of Lorenz's concern with aggression are two social problems which bear directly on the ethical problems of our day: the growth of social behaviour in children, and the presence of violence and war. An historical study of aggression is essential here.

> With humanity in its present cultural and technological situation we have good reason to consider intra-specific aggression the greatest of all dangers. We shall not improve our changes of counteracting it if we accept it as something metaphysical and inevitable, but on the other hand, we shall perhaps succeed in finding remedies if we investigate the chain of its natural causation.[319]

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[318] Dobzhansky, Animal Behaviour, 1963, p. 393

[319] Lorenz, On Aggression, pp. 22-23

3. Freedman and Roe: Anxiety and Conflict

The epitome of the kind of study which will be increasingly helpful in our understanding of human behaviour is the careful analysis of"Evolution and Human Behaviour," by Anna Roe and Lawrence Freedman, which appears in Roe and Simpson's volume Behaviour and Evolution.[320]

Their particular concern is the genesis of anxiety and conflict in man, which is examined in its evolutionary origin:

> It is impressive to note the biological antiquity of the conflicts found in human psychology between mutually incompatible but strongly felt aggressive, sexual, or fearful responses to the same person or objects.[321]

The dynamics of the individual psyche are important to anxiety and conflict, but the roots of the behaviour and the beginning of the study is rather in the "antiquity of the conflicts." In answer to those who stress that the mind of the individual man is the mediator of his specialized behaviour, they reply that:

> Man's emotional behaviour[322] continues to be under the dominance of a system which lacks abilities

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[320] Roe, etc., "Evolution and Human Behaviour", in Behaviour and Evolution (New York: Yale University Press, 1958)

[321] Ibid.

[322] "Emotional behaviour" is an unfortunately obscure phrase. We take it here to mean non-rational behaviour.

> for specific discrimination, for verbal or symbolic capacity, or for self-awareness.[323]

In short, it operates under the necessities of the biological system which he has received in the process of evolution. From the beginning "man is an animal with a potent pre-disposition to the genesis of internal conflict and anxiety."[324]

Throughout the article the authors keep the necessary balance in the distinction that emphasis also must be placed on "cultural" and environmental factors in human behaviour; but, important as these are, they come after the pre-dispositions to behaviour in man's evolutionary endowments.

As a focal point for the entire discussion, they propose as a working hypothesis that:

> Man's evolutionary endowment, successful though it has made him, contains within it hindrances to his social evolution as well as self-destructive potential.[325]

Since it is "probably true," that man's biological survival and social evolution can be understood only "within the context of his relationship with other humans," his greatest promise and his most fearful potentialities spring from the nature of these human dependencies. Man's behavioural tendencies are best understood by reference to the dependent existence he lives within his social groupings.

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[323] Ibid., p. 459

[324] Ibid., p. 461

[325] Ibid., p. 455

Freedman and Roe work from the Darwinian understanding of man as an animal endowed with superior intelligence and social instincts; man is an individual with individual intelligence, but he works out that individuality in his social contacts, in the beginning through the small family group.

In other words, in order for man to become man he had to become socially involved with the other humans, as natural selection began to "favor" the survival of the small group more than the individuals outside it. The essential conditions for the survival of man as man included a wide range of what became characteristically human behaviour. The extended period of infancy, e.g., during which the individual is almost entirely dependent upon others in the family group, is a necessary prerequisite for cultural psycho-social evolution to take place. If man is to transmit a large body of "cultural" information to each future man and woman, there must be the extended period of dependency in which the infant can be educated. But the possibility of an infant surviving through an extended period where he is relatively helpless (unlike a puppy for example which leaves its parent and is relatively able to take care of itself within a few months) depends on the existence of a family unit which is willing and able to protect and teach him. It is the cohesive small family unit which, especially in the period of primitive man, protects the individual and

provides for his needs. But to do that, the unit must be stable and cooperative in its task. Hence, any behaviour which is counter to the preservation of the small family unit will be selected negatively.

> Prolonged deprivation of parental care has quite different significance for the child in a hunting or primitive agricultural culture than it has for the child whose parents are relatively free from constant preoccupation with food production.[326]

The point is clear: natural selection favoured the behaviour which was able to put the safety and survival of the small family unit above the preferences of the individual.[327] Individual aggression against other members had to be eliminated. But conflict was inevitable. The individual retained his individual drives for his own individual needs. But in the new setting he is forced to:

> sublimate his socially harmful or unacceptable impulses into their opposite and to divert the object of biological drives from outside foci back toward himself.[328]

If he had not done so, man as we know him, would not have survived.

Incompatible elements of individual expression would have disrupted the security of the family group,

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[326] Ibid., pp. 474-75

[327] The point is critically important, but the proper vocabulary for expressing is difficult and probably misleading. It sounds as though "natural selection" had a consciousness of its own which allowed it to choose the behaviour which is somehow liked. But from the evolutionary viewpoint which we have adopted, such consciousness on the part of natural selection itself would be difficult to understand. Perhaps we should say only that this type of behaviour was selected.

[328] Roe, etc., "Evolution and Human Behaviour", p. 465

and helpless infants would have died in infancy. The incompatible elements were selected out in favour of those which were able to manage a repression of the individual instinctive drives, in favour of the small family unit.

> Man is a conflictful, ambivalent, bipolar animal who achieves a measure of adaptive stability by repressing some part of his incompatible strivings, delaying, inverting, or transmuting others, and fulfilling some.[329]

To allow for the emergence of modern man, the protection and existence of the family unit had to become more important than the individual members. A selection of a "population" took place. To ensure the essential period of development, the family group had to work against the individual outlets, which themselves were driven by instinctual drives built up in preceding evolutionary development.

This analysis leads naturally to a direct discussion of the relationship between the evolution of animals and the psychology of man; which is seen most clearly in the aspects of conflict between what the individual would otherwise do, and what must be done within the family or social unit. Roe and Freedman's historical analysis also leads to a current application.

> Since the family is a group of individuals which shares food, territory, and property, it follows that for the success of the group, the acquisition of such

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[329] Ibid., p. 466

> materials must come under rather rigid social regulation.[330]

But the rewards and punishments of this regulation cannot be internally consistent, as modern psychology so completely confirms. The beloved person is also the frustrating agent, and the pleasure-giving object also inflicts pain.

Although Roe and Freedman accept the evidence that "a propensity to aggressivity exists in humans as part of their genetic endowment," they are also aware of the difficulties involved in determining how much aggressive behaviour comes by genetic pre-disposition, and how much is "learned" during the life history of the individual person.

> Thus far no environment has provided, at least to any mammalian group, a frustration free life experience, nor has any aggression free species appeared. The distinction between physical aggressiveness and psychic aggressiveness is the difference between behaviour and fantasy, the act and the idea. But physical aggressiveness is the antecedent; the "drive" is a necessary precondition of the thought.[331]

Instinctual requirement precedes the actual aggressivity which appears during the lifetime of the individual.

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Following a similar line of argument as that used in "aggression," the authors also discuss the sexual needs of the individual, which exist in the same matrix of family

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[330] Ibid., p. 465

[331] Ibid., pp. 470-71

conflict. Anxiety came to the individual who, as a result of the limitations on his sexual outlets enforced by the family group, was unable to "fulfill" the physical and sexual needs which were suggested by his individual genetic requirement. To maintain the stability of the family, the sexual behaviour of its individual members must be regulated. But then,

> The presence of sexual needs in a developing human who is prevented from gaining sexual access to the males and females in the familial environment . . . leads to privation, frustration and conflict.[332]

The conflict results from the previous development of aggressive behaviour in individual sexual behaviour. The method of obtaining a partner in evolutionary history is often competitive and frequently combative. Darwin called attention to the sexual advantage for the aggressive male in particular: it gave him access to the females as he subdued the other males who were his sexual rivals.[333] In the evolutionary development of animal life aggressive behaviour worked to the individual's selective advantage.

The thesis of the article is made clear once again: the same instinctual requirements which were selected by the natural process and were necessary for the individual, became a hindrance in the small family setting. Evolution brought the sources of the conflict.

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[332] Ibid., p. 468

[333] Ibid., p. 469 - No re-issue of the survival of the fittest is intended. See discussion circa page 58.

It is equally important, however, to understand that as natural selection brought about the small unit, and thereby created difficulties for the individual, it brought also the potential for humanity as it exists in the modern world. The individual drives did not disappear. They became, as modern psychology attests, redirected into the outlets which favoured the development of modern civilized man. Through sublimation of his natural instincts, or naturally acquired instincts, (which we can say were forced upon man in his development), man can redirect his biological needs to a higher level of behaviour and to a concern for a larger group: "to love of family, his community, state and the world."[334]

> His sexual nature (for example) may lead him to widening ambits of human affection, his acquisitive propensities to an optimum balance of work and leisure, and his aggressive drives to heightened social efficiency through attacks on perils common to all men.[335]

There the relevance of such studies to ethics becomes perfectly clear. The highest type of Darwinian fitness of human genotypes, as Dobzhansky once noted, is the capacity for education, "to profit from experience, and to adjust one's behavior to the requirements of one's surroundings."[336]

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[334] Ibid., p. 469

[335] Ibid., p. 478

[336] Dobzhansky, Mankind Evolving, p. 251

We learned, or it was learned for us, that the adjustment of behaviour to the requirement of society was a desirable trait which led to the success of those who best so adjusted. Social behaviour, the area in which ethical activity takes place, is a part of man's basic requirement, as Lorenz said, he has to be complemented by culture. The process favoured the development of the man who was capable of developing beyond the individual inclinations of his instinctual behaviour. Homo Sapiens was able to "subdue the dominions of the earth" because of the human social life which arose out of the potential in the life process itself.

We are equipped to do more than survive. We are enabled naturally to go beyond the instinctive life into the realm of thought and ethical speculation. The evolutionary process:

> implanted in us extraordinary strivings for self-actualization and self-transcendence, for beauty and for rectitude. Homo Sapiens is not only the sole tool-making animal and the sole political animal, he is also the sole ethical animal.[337]

As one of more than a million biological species which have inhabited the earth, man has been the recipient of that ethical sense which enables him to search for himself into the meanings of his distinctive behaviour. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil belongs to the creation story: it is at that point where a living breathing creature became man. Man is, as Waddington notes, "The Ethical Animal."

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[337] Ibid., p. 339

C. Evolution and Ethics

Some Interim Conclusions

While admittedly there is a risk in drawing conclusions in a field of study expanding so rapidly, we can see some interim conclusions emerging in the work of Freedman and Roe, as well as the other authors we have discussed. They point to three areas:

1. Concerning the presence of social-ethical behaviour in humans which has its roots in the evolutionary process preceding man.

2. Assuming this general presence, they introduce some of the particular behavioural tendencies which can be investigated.

3. They relate how an understanding of these tendencies is appropriate and important for a study of Christian ethics.

1. On the first, this thesis concludes that there can be no reasonable doubt. The weight of evidence goes to support it. Drawing on an earlier conclusion that the passage from animal to "man" involved more than his physical appearance, we repeat now that we cannot approach the study of man's ethical behaviour and ignore its origins in the animal world. Man did not arrive as a shapeless mass which cultural, environmental, and

psychological pressures molded into a human being; contrary to what has been, and is believed by behavioural psychologists and some moral philosophers.[338] Man arrived, in the first instance, as well as in each individual life, with certain biological directives which influence far more than the shape of his skull and the tilt of his jaw.[339] And, although we admire the caution of writers like Maynard Smith:

> In fact, we can be fairly confident that the "nature," (i.e., the genetically determined capacities) of human beings has not greatly changed since the neolithic revolution, . . . There are probably genetically determined differences of a statistical kind in temperament and talents as well as in the physical type between human races . . .[340]

we conclude that these genetically determined characteristics help to direct the intellectual and socio-ethical behaviour of man. These can never be thought of as autonomous, but, as Freedman and Roe so ably pointed out, they precede the development of cultural and personal behaviour. Unless a "genetic requirement" is present in the individual man, the observed behaviour pattern cannot develop. More particularly it is always the inter-working of basic needs and actual fulfillments which determine behaviour.

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[338] As C. H. Waddington writes in The Ethical Animal, "Remarkably few professional philosophers of the present day so much as mention the fact that the human sensory and intellectual apparatus has been brought into being by an evolutionary process whose observed effects in all other instances are to produce operative systems conformable to the situations with which they will have to deal." p. 74

[339] Cf. pp. 73-75 in this thesis.

[340] Smith, Theory of Evolution, p. 291

We must, of course, repeat a corrective which Barnett aimed at Lorenz: insofar as we cannot finally speak about the genetic requirements of "man" in general, as if we were all endowed with the same genes. It is always the individual man on whom the genetic predisposition works. What will generally be true for the species, will in some instances be untrue for the individual. But whatever the specific, we conclude: "that through the recent work done on instinctive behaviour in animals and man, we now know that human beings really are born with built-in drives."[341] These "built-in drives," initially at least, are inherited from our primate ancestry and are carried along in the genetic pool of mankind. Thus the recent statement of Professor Thorpe that we are coming now to realize that there is "hardly any aspect of the behaviour of animals which may not have some reference to problems in human behaviour"[342] directs us to an examination of ethological research.

In the years of this century the work of the psychologists and sociologists has for the most part been accepted into the work of the faculties of our theological colleges. Through the years we have realized that what appeared to be an attack on our truth at the start, was an attack mainly on our pretentions. We

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[341] Carleton S. Coon, Man and His Future, "Growth and Development of Social Groups," ed. Gordon Wolstenholme, (London: J&A Churchill, Ltd., 1963), p. 122

[342] W. H. Thorpe and O. L. Zangwill, Current Problems in Animal Behaviour (Cambridge: University Press, 1961), p. 167

have found them to be helpful companions in our attempt to understand man and his behaviour. Such, in time, this thesis suggests, must be our attitude to the biological sciences, and especially the students of evolutionary science.

Man is inseparable from nature and is understood as part of the whole life system.[343] His social behaviour is part of the system and cannot be separated from the universal process which brought him into being.

> Man can alter the external environment to fit his physical needs, foibles, and wishes, but . . . his innate responses are still those which were developed during his evolutionary past to adapt him to the conditions then prevailing but which no longer exist.[344]

If we have learned that "the behaviour of man is far less subject to reason and intelligence than once was supposed,"[345] we should also learn that it is far less subject to his particular lifetime than we thought, and examine it through its origins in the animal world.

2. Assuming this presence, we can then discuss some of the particular behavioural tendencies which should be investigated:

In The Direction of Human Development, Professor Ashley Montagu announced the purpose of his book as an

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[343] L. L. Whyte, The Next Development in Man (London: The Cresset Press, 1944), pp. 54-55

[344] Dubos, Man Adapting, p. 28

[345] W. H. R. Rivers, Instinct and the Unconscious (Cambridge: University Press, 1924, Second Edition), p. 40

attempt to answer the question: "What is man's original nature, and how is that nature influenced and conditioned to assume a socially functional form?"[346] That fundamental question we can borrow as a suitable purpose for this concluding section of Part II in our research.

> For man is not simply a social creature; indeed, he could never have become the kind of social being he is without the unique biological equipment which supplies the potentialities enabling him to undergo socialization. It follows, therefore, that in order to comprehend the nature of the processes whereby man becomes a social being, it is essential to understand, as far as possible, not only the nature of these organic potentialities of human behaviour, but also the nature of their interaction with the socializing process.[347]

In the following where we outline certain specific areas where this "socialization" takes place, we will note that the interaction, rather than the "instinct" itself, is of first importance. But "the hereditary element in our ethical codes," as Miriam Rothschild pointed out in Waddington's Science and Ethics, have been underestimated and have unduly emphasized the role of individual psychological types, experience, reason, etc. While:

> Some of the most striking phenomena in animal behaviour are those inherited trends of behaviour which require a relatively very small amount of conditioning in order to fix them.[348]

C. R. Carpenter adds:

> Those activities which are ethically accepted such as altruism, strong emotional affection, and

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[346] Ibid., p. 1

[347] Ibid.

[348] Waddington, Science and Ethics, p. 89

> co-operation - are attributed to man's higher intellectual processes if not to super-human origins. The naturalistic approach to the study of human behaviour, competitive and co-operative, egoistic and antagonistic, recognizes roots at a pre-human level.[349]

The over-all intent of Carpenter's comment would be misleading, if it is taken to mean that "super-human origins" and "man's higher intellectual processes" are not involved in these ethically accepted activities; but pre-human roots are evident.

We will introduce a few of them briefly as token representation of the possible areas in which further detailed study can be undertaken. Each of them could form a suitable research topic in itself.

1. Social Behaviour: the important ethical implications of man's involvement with man. This broad topic concerns the history of man's relationship with man: the relationship in which ethical activity takes place. Roe and Freedman introduced one aspect of the topic. Carleton S. Coon offers another, and gives firm support for the importance of examining early man in his small group unit; for:

> During the vast expanse of the Pleistocene, in which man evolved, breeding populations and nations were small. Only during the past eight or nine millenia can any have grown much larger. It may therefore be that Homo Sapiens is primarily adapted to living in small, simply organized, face-to-face

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[349] Quoted by Robert Ardrey, African Genesis, p. 171, where Ardrey accepts the quotation to mean precisely what we mentioned as misleading.

> groups, and this is perhaps true of the vast majority of mankind today.[350]

We will not attempt to repeat Kropotkin's exaggeration of "the ethic of co-operation" as the controlling mechanism of natural selection, but it is important to mention again the work of W. C. Allee and others, regarding social co-operation of animals. Co-operative action with other members of the small social unit existed and exists in the "pre-ethical" setting. Before the intellectual development of man allowed for philosophical discussions of the meaning of moral action, the behaviour itself was present. Gavin deBeer noted:

> In many of the higher animals, parental care and self sacrifice, in the interest of other members of the family, such as incubating gravid females and young, have been favoured by natural selection and conferred benefit on the species. From earliest human times, the survival value of altruistic behaviour has been enhanced because of the prolongation of childhood and the consolidation of the family that have characterized the evolution of man.[351]

As is well demonstrated, a social bond was developed in the history of the primates prior to man. M. R. A. Chance makes it clear that this form of social life, "shown by some present day primates" may well have played "a crucial part in setting us on the course we have now taken."[352]

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[350] Coon, "Growth and Development of Social Groups," in Man and His Future, p. 122

[351] deBeer, Evolution, p. 21

[352] M. R. A. Chance, "The Nature and Special Features of Instinctive Social Bond of Primates," ed. Sherwood L. Washburn, p. 17

Hallowell adds that the major clue to the basic continuity between man and the other primate groups, and the clue which makes comparisons of similarities and differences significant:

> is the fact that we are dealing with gregarious animals. Whatever the ultimate determinants of sociality in the primates . . . all forms of cultural adaptation . . . are based on some system of social action. But systems of social action are not unique in man. They also occur in infra-human primates and . . . constitute a generic and characteristic mode of adaptation.[353]

Caution is required, as Thompson noted;[354] for at present we cannot provie any "phylo-genetic trait." But that says only that we do not have enough information yet to draw final knowledge on the specific traits involved. It does not detract from the belief that we are able to understand human social behaviour better in the light of research into the evolutionary origin of social man. A series of studies such as those in Washburn's volume Social Life of Early Man,[355] is a sure entrance into this study.

What can be said for now is that many aspects of human behaviour to which we attribute socio-ethical value are activities and goals which appear in the natural setting of our animal ancestry.

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[353] A. Irving Hallowell, "The Proto-Cultural Foundations of Human Adaptation," Washburn volume, pp. 237-38

[354] William Thompson in Roe and Simpson's Behaviour and Evolution, p. 308

[355] Sherwood L. Washburn, Editor, Social Life of Early Man (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1962)

Man is a moral animal. Moral and ethical systems are necessary for normal human functioning, and are major adaptive elements in religion. The propensity for developing moral concepts and the disposition to learn them, as well as the precepts themselves, are adaptations acquired in the course of our biological and social evolution. When viewed in this way, rather than as mere edicts from a stern and incomprehensible source, those precepts achieve a higher sanction and become the more impelling.[356]

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[356]Simpson, This View of Life, p. 233

2. Aggression

To the work of Konrad Lorenz in On Aggression, we can add independent testimony from other sources. The central point made by Lorenz was that aggression in man is a basic biological phenomenon which is inherited from his predecessors.

Roe and Simpson agree:

> Clinically we know that inner alarm and outer aggression are not uncharacteristic of man; possibly he is reflecting his mixed evolutionary heritage. Certainly a level of aggressivity is adaptative and essential for survival.[357]

His "mixed evolutionary heritage" is the clue here. Aggression is partially understood in reference to its occurrence in the social "bond" behaviour of early man. Thorpe makes it clear that "all animals with bond behaviour also have aggressive behaviour."[358] Sir Arthur Keith also explained the "duality of tribal mentality," where at one moment, acting within his own social unit, the individual assisted in the co-operative welfare of the tribal members. At some other moment, in opposition to neighbouring tribes which threatened his own, the action was reversed.[359] Thorpe again observes:

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[357] Roe and Simpson, Behaviour and Evolution, p. 470

[358] Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, p. 84

[359] Keith, Essays on Evolution, p. 5

> It is quite easy to imagine that in a kind of society which many of the ancestors of man may have passed through, hate may have been a good thing . . . The hate of an animal society for strange clans or groups of its own species may in fact be ethologically eugenic from the point of view of the selection of characters which go to develop a highly elaborate and secure social life. Thus is may be that the greatest social, moral and religious problem of today, namely that of war, cannot be fully understood without recourse to a knowledge of the progress of the evolution of human social life.[360]

Thorpe is correct here.[361] The major ethical problem of our time may indeed be war. But also in the relatively minute problems of everyday existence, individual aggression may be reflecting the aggressive "instinct" of the evolutionary past.

Dubos continues with another illustration of the fact that man retains "essential traits of his evolutionary past." In man there is the persistence of hormonal and metabolic responses:

> which were developed to meet threatening situations during his animal ancestry, but which no longer fit the needs of life in civilized societies. . . . This power to mobilize . . . resources for flight or for fight has been certainly of great advantage throughout evolution . . . in particular with predators and enemies of all sorts. But what was once an advantage is increasingly becoming a handicap under the conditions of modern human life.[362]

E. W. Sinnott may have gone too far when he refers to the "selfish instinct" which is "an ingrained trait in

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[360] Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, p. 85

[361] Ibid., pp. 122 ff. Thorpe discusses eugenics, monogamy, pre-marital intercourse, homosexuality, etc.

[362] Dubos, Man Adapting, p. 29

man," as the "source of that original sin which theologians talked so much about."[363] But he is allied with the others in emphasizing the continuation of individual aggressivity from animal to man.

Ethologist Eibl-Eibesfeldt pinpoints the issue in his useful article "The Fighting Behaviour of Animals."[364] There he discusses the universality of fighting among members of species with aggression as a basic biological phenomenon. He too, complains that investigators of aggressive behaviour in man "have usually been satisfied to find its origin in the life experience of the individual animal or of the social group."[365] Drawing on his own experiments as well as others he points to:

> A growing body of evidence from observation in the field and experiments in the laboratory, however, points to the conclusion that this vital mode of behaviour is not learned by the individual but is innate in the species, like the organs specially evolved for such combat in many animals. The ceremonial fighting routines that have developed in the course of evolution are highly characteristic for each species; they are faithfully followed in fights between members of the species and are almost never violated.[366]

It seems likely, he continues, that in the human species:

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[363] Sinnott, Matter, Mind and Man, p. 162; a book which also indulges in other excesses, especially regarding the presence in evolution of a biological "will" which motivates the organism to develop forward.

[364] Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, "The Fighting Behaviour of Animals," Scientific American, December 1961, pp. 112-122

[365] Ibid., p. 112

[366] Ibid., p. 112

> Aggressive behaviour evolved in the service of the same functions as it did in the case of the lower animals. Undoubtedly, it was useful and adaptive thousands of years ago, when men lived in small groups.[367]

In contemporary human society the problem now is that a formerly useful behaviour is in large part maladaptive. But Eibl-Eibesfeldt also realizes that aggressiveness "is not the only motive governing the interaction of members of the same species."

> In gregarious animals there are equally innate patterns of behaviour leading to mutual help and support, and one may assert that altruism is no less deeply rooted than aggressiveness. Man can be as basically good as he can be bad, but he is good primarily toward his family and friends. He has had to learn in the course of history that his family has grown, coming to encompass first his clan, then his tribe and his nation. Perhaps man will eventually be wise enough to learn that his family now includes all mankind.[368]

In Psychoanalysis and Politics, psychologist Money-Kyrle, who investigated the atrocities of Nazi Germany during World War II, observes that since we want to discover more about what determines aggression in group relations:

> We should begin by allowing full weight to the instinctal legacy bequeathed us by the rigorous conditions that brought our species into being. Natural selection in a competitive environment favours the development of self-preservative instincts which are always egoistic and usually predatory as well. But we must remember that it does so only so far as these instincts favour the survival of offspring to inherit them.[369]

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[367] Ibid., p. 122

[368] Ibid., p. 122

[369] Ibid., pp. 92-93

Evolution favoured those who by virtue of innate drives and cultural endowments were "best able to love their neighbours as themselves and hate all strangers like the devil."[370] From his work in the psychology of the Nazi families who produced the keepers of the concentration camps, Money-Kyrle is fully aware of the family and cultural settings which produce such monstrosities. But he continues regarding early man:

> In producing such a character both biological and cultural selection must have played a part; but the fact that two thousand years of Christianity have altered it so little suggests that it is mainly a biological endowment . . . It is an intense ambivalence - a primary attitude of mind in which every object, and especially every human being, can simultaneously provoke the extremes of love and hatred.[371]

Agreeing with the accepted understanding of natural selection that the traits which produced the most offspring who survive will be favoured, he concludes:

> A line deficient in egoistic instincts would soon be without parents to have offspring. But a line without altruistic instincts, to protect the family, would also perish for lack of mature children to continue it! So we may distinguish two groups of instincts, or rather two groups of their derivatives since the same instinct may have derivatives in both: the egoistic which indirectly, and the altruistic which directly, favour the survival of offspring to inherit them.[372]

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[370] Money-Kyrle, Psychoanalysis and Politics, p. 95

[371] Ibid.

[372] Ibid., p. 93

We can then conclude that on the basis of this representative evidence drawn from various fields of scientific research, the potential assistance which an evolutionary study of aggression has for ethics is essential to the completion of our task.

3. Human Sexuality

In the current discussions of Christian Ethics, some of which will be considered later in this thesis, it seems reasonable to state that no issue is so controversial as the ethical problems which surround sexual morality. Thus it may seem inadequate at first that our section here is so brief. We do return to the topic in later chapters when we discuss Barth and Barry, e.g., on sexuality. It is mentioned now only because it so obviously belongs in a presentation of evolution and behaviour. In the work of W. H. Thorpe, mentioned earlier,[373] and in Ritter's Charles Darwin and the Golden Rule;[374] as well as in Darlington's Genetics and Man,[375] some initial approaches to the topic are found. Montagu points out that the "fundamentally social nature of all living things has its origin in the reproductive relationship between parent and offspring."[376]

> In the nature of the reproductive process . . . we see, then, the basis for the development of social life, and the suggestion is that social life represents the response to organic drives, the expression

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[373] Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, pp. 122 ff

[374] Chapter 9

[375] Esp. Part II

[376] Montagu, Direction of Human Development, p. 12

> of functions which are inextricably a part of the life of the organism. The universality of social life would seem to indicate as much.[377]

From that start we are introduced to a wide range of moral concerns which run from the problems of marital relationships and homosexuality, etc., to the wider problems of population control and eugenics.

Finally, one specific study can serve our purpose to show the special importance of evolutionary information in the development of moral judgment on the subject of human sexuality. Dr. Richard P. Michael has written a useful article on "Bisexuality and Ethics," in which he discusses the evolutionary origin of bisexual behavioural patterns. Dr. Michael states that he is not attempting a direct analogy with the human situation, but such patterns are seen "with considerable frequency among the infra human-primates."[378] "If it is conceded that man, as a species, carries the weight of an evolutionary past on his shoulders" it is understandable that in one well-known study (Ford and Beach) "in only 28 of the 76 human societies studied were homosexual activities absent."[379] Bisexuality can be influenced by non-rational factors.

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[377] Ibid.

[378] Dr. R. P. Michael, "Bisexuality and Ethics," in Biology and Ethics, ed. F. J. Ebling, Proceedings of a Symposium, Royal Geographical Society, London, Sept. 26-7, 1969. (London: Academic Press, 1969), pp. 67-72

[379] Ibid., p. 69

Recent experimental findings, says Dr. Michael, show that chemical influences can also affect homosexual and bisexual behaviour. With chemical injections, e.g., which are used to help prevent miscarriage or to treat a genetic malformation, "In both conditions the human foetus is exposed to excess androgen and external masculinization results.

> Evidence is thus available that in the human, as in infra-human primates and infra-primate mammals, the behavioural potential can be influenced by the chemical composition of the environment of the embryo during critical periods in its development. All these experiments and observations have serious implications for our approach to and understanding of, human sexuality.[380]

Behavioural comparisons reveal that bisexual behaviour occurs as a "normal biological variation in a wide range of mammalian forms including primates and man.

> Experimental evidence is now accumulating which points to the existence of bisexual potentialities, perhaps as distinct systems in the mammalian brain which can be influenced during critical periods in development in a male or female direction, by chemical, hormonal means.[381]

The ethical problem, in light of these possibilities, concludes Dr. Michael, "is not to account for it, but rather to account for its ferocious condemnation in almost all western cultures."[382]

When we return later to this topic and discuss, e.g., Karl Barth's denunciation of homosexuality as "unnatural for man," the avoidance of the type of study conducted by Dr. Michael (and many others) is an inexcusable

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[380] Ibid., p. 71 [381] Ibid. [382] Ibid.

moral oversight. Whether our moral conclusions condemn or condone homosexual or bisexual practice, they must be based on the "natural" possibilities and potential for man, if they are to be useful to the cause of contemporary Christian Ethics.

III. Transitional Chapter - Bridging the Gap

III. TRANSITIONAL CHAPTER - BRIDGING THE GAP

We should mention here that our thesis involves "morals" as well as "ethics." Broadly speaking, we define ethics as the study of nature of man and his ethical life, and normally we would be referring to the kind of ideal goals and principles which men acknowledge as having some claim upon their life and thought. Ethics is concerned with the theory of what the ethical life should be, a purely axiological study. "Morals," on the other hand, we use to refer to the kind of practical moral choices which men have to make day by day throughout their lifes: what kinds of decisions "ought" to be made in specific choices.

Sellers makes a similar distinction when he writes:

> Morality is adapted to holding us to a given course of conduct, to going on with offering concrete guidelines . . . Ethics, on the other hand, is a more systematic and comprehensive study of human actions, their significance, and our changing situation. It is a careful, reflective effort at knowledge which asks the meaning of human conduct in its setting and measures our conduct by some fundamental criterion of excellence or of ultimate value.[1]

In "Life Sciences and Ethics" we have dealt with both. One can hardly speak about the historical origin of the nature of human sexuality, for example, without

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[1] Sellers, Theological Ethics, p. 4

investigating some of the situations in which particular men and women act sexually. Neither could one write about the evolutionary origin of the small family unit without also becoming interested in some of the concrete family situations which occur in our modern world. And surely the point of examining the origin of human aggression is to apply that information to the solutions of the moral problem of violence in our time. In the following section, Christian Ethics and The Life Sciences, we will maintain inter-relatedness between the two.

The writers we have chosen to use represent three different kinds of emphasis regarding ethics as well as morals: F. R. Tennant, e.g., was almost entirely concerned with the theoretical framework of ethics. His investigations seldom led him to write on practical moral problems. Bishop F. R. Barry, on the other hand, has had a principal interest in the problems of practical Christian morality. Karl Barth's "Special" and "General" ethics brings the two strains together.

In "The Life Sciences and Ethics" we concluded that unless a scientist has a balanced view of the nature of man, including both his natural existence and his supernatural significance, he would fail to offer a satisfactory ethical approach. We charged the evolutionary scientist with a special responsibility for maintaining a distinction between that subject matter of morality which is verifiable by scientific investigation and that which is not.

Now as we turn to representatives of Christian ethics in the next section, we will apply similar criteria. A balance is necessary for the Christian moralist as well. We will ask whether the theologian has understood the man who exists as a continuing part of the evolutionary process. We will judge the uses to which these men have put the findings of the life scientist, both in their understanding of the nature of man and in the approach which they take to the moral problems which follow. We will be interested to see if these writers in ethics are alert to the special kind of ethical problems which arise out of this subject. There are some which have to do with personality itself, basically what man is and whether he is free to control himself in his environment.

One major point of this thesis is that there must be a relevant relationship between the facts and values that are involved in moral discourse. If either fact or value is denied, or relegated to a secondary position, a distortion will inevitably occur. In order to discuss the value, we have to have the facts at hand. In God and Reality, Professor Burkill complained of the custom in axiological discussions where values are divorced from facts:

> . . . the world disclosed in common experience is eminently temporal; it is historical through and through. The facts of which it is composed are located in a certain region of space and dated in a certain period of time.[2]

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[2]Burkill, God and Reality, p. 99

As we live, values are found among the facts of particular existential situations. "To think of a value apart from the concrete situation in which it arises is to entertain a conceptual abstraction."[3] To our particular interest in evolution, Burkhill writes of the "certain continuity between man and the simple products of nature."

> The continuity is not merely temporal but also embraces striking relational and functional correspondences between natural organizations otherwise widely separated. Thus the distinctively human values, like truth, beauty, and goodness, have their animal anticipations in the biological world. The recognition of this fact does not, of course, derogate from the distinctive character of human values . . . Human values are realized in history and have an historical ancestry.[4]

The facts of the origin of the attributes which we designate as having moral value are as interrelated with the values themselves as in the historical continuity itself. The facts of man's needs as a social, ethical, and religious animal are integral parts of what has value in his good behaviour. As Peter Green wrote in the Problem of Right Conduct:

> It would seem that a basis for ethics cannot resonably be sought otherwise than in the true nature of man. Right conduct for man must be that which is natural and suitable to such a being as man really and truly is.[5]

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[3] Ibid., p. 103

[4] Ibid., p. 105

[5] Peter Green, The Problem of Right Conduct (London: Longman's, Green & Co., 1931), p. 86

The point, repeated, is that in the matter of "morals", values derived outside of the facts of man and his situation cannot be suitably imposed. The descriptive knowledge of the ethos around us helps to define the man. The nature of the man who responds and the nature of the world in which the response is made, are open to investigation. Professor Sellers reminds us that "In the final analysis we are to visualize the input of wordly wisdom into the fund of Christian ethical insight not as an admixture of extraneous knowledge, but as a continuation of revelation itself."[6] Or as Dr. Long noted:

> Two elements constitute the roots of the ethical enterprise. Ethics involves theory and practice, ends and means, standards and applications. It is not clear that a separation between these two aspects of the problem is as real in life as it can be made in theoretical discourse. Men often reflect upon what they have done following their actions, or at least during their actions . . . Nevertheless, whether in sequence, in combination, or in seeming detachment from one another, the elements of standard-setting and decision implementing constitute twin foci of the ethical enterprise."[7]

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We have proposed, too, an apologetic task for the Christian moralist. That task presupposes a familiarity with the information, but it also requires a tolerance and humility in accepting the inter-relatedness of the findings

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[6] Sellers, Theological Ethics, p. 83

[7] Edward L. Long, A Survey of Christian Ethics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 40

of other disciplines. It is a task that Principal J. B. Habgood has defined successfully. He explains that:

> . . . with this popular concern about ethical problems there seems to be a corresponding need to make theology relevant. . . . One of the obvious ways of doing it would seem to be through Christian ethics.[8]

The moralist, after all, is the theologian who by the very nature of his subject matter is more directly involved in the world than the other theological and Biblical disciplines. Dean Inge commented forty years ago that:

> Our main difficulty is to get the fundamental principles of Christian Ethics accepted in a rather vulgar and materialistic society, and in the words of Dr. Jacks, "to recover the lost radiance of the Christian religion." Our subordinate, but still very important task is to apply these fundamental principles to the situation created by new knowledge and new conditions.[9]

This thesis holds that our standards in Christian ethics have abiding validity. Our task is to see that validity in reference to the concurrent validity which is discovered in the world around us. "The ethicist must constantly engage in reconnaissance of the ethos to determine if his theological stance is a genuine remedy for the human predicament."[10]

> Our method, then, is to begin positively with the Gospel, theologically understood as a promise of wholeness to man. From there we move to the ethos, the conventional way of life, which is, according to the

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[8] J. S. Habgood, "Ethics in the Church Today," The Church Quarterly Review; vol. 164, 1963, pp. 470-484.

[9] W. R. Inge, Christian Ethics and Modern Problems (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1930), p. 420

[10] Sellers, Theological Ethics, p. 81

> Gospel, ever in need of restoration to wholeness. At this point we attempt to "get the facts," gain descriptive knowledge of the ethos with a view to concrete diagnosis of its form of frailty, its own rendering of sin.[11]

"Most of us," wrote Habgood in the same article mentioned above, "are ill-equipped to deal with the ordinary claims of intelligent humanism," and we have forfeited our moral leadership. To the challenges of our day, we respond with minds made up, determined not to yield one inch of Christian ground, and repeat the old authoritarianism anew.

> A man like Brunner seems to take a delight in presenting the absolute demand of God as uncompromisingly as possible. His motive is so to stress the impossibility of the demand, that man is fully revealed in all his sinfulness and helplessness, and ethics is superseded by the Gospel.[12]

It is in such an area that Bishop Ian Ramsey proposed that the moralist should be involved in a mutual and exploratory task with and between Natural Law and Christian Ethics. In one way our study here can be seen as an adjunct of that proposal. Ramsey wrote:

> . . . at least there is a possibility of moral principles having roots both in that moral obligation and those key ideas which are called "Natural Law," and in that Christian commitment and discourse from which characteristic moral obligations and principles can be likewise derived.[13]

Bishop Ramsey wrote of the three possible approaches to the relationship which Christian Ethics can have with

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[11] Ibid., p. 81

[12] Habgood, "Ethics in the Church Today" The Church Quarterly Review, vol. 164, 1963, pp. 471-84.

[13] Ian Ramsey, Christian Ethics and Contemporary Philosophy, p. 393

natural law. No Christian would grant the first: an absolute identity of the key ideas of natural law and Christian ethics. Some would argue, secondly, that they are entirely "other and conflicting." But there is a third kind of relationship mentioned by Ramsey which is identical to the attitude of compatibility and intercommunication which we propose in this thesis between life science and Christian ethics. He suggests that they should be "other and supplementary."

The supplementation "is not going to be an easy matter." Quoting H. L. A. Hart in The Concept of Law, Ramsey notes how Hart's "minimum purpose of survival" can in part be aligned with the Christian principle which regards life as a gift of God and its preservation in the human, the touchstone of human worth and dignity. Difficulties arise in trying to accommodate the idea too completely, for the Christian idea of the doctrine of a future life raises the subject to an eschatological level and any parallel with "survival" as the minimum purpose of human ethical codes. Much additional study and intercommunication is necessary, but

> What is needed before any significant progress is made is (a) some elucidation of that basic obligation and associated key ideas which we would call Natural Law; and (b) some formulation of "the most reliable Christian principles and the moral obligations they express."[14]

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[14] Ibid., p. 393

For now there is:

> a possibility of moral principles having roots both in that moral obligation and those key ideas which are called "natural law," and in that Christian commitment and discourse from which characteristic moral obligations and principles can be likewise derived.[15]

Neither need be dissolved nor weakened, but a mutual effort can work to the advantage of both, and in direct result to the benefit of mankind at large. Ramsey closes the article:

> It is plainly no easy matter to rehabilitate Natural Law or to supplement it reliably with Christian principles. But to see what needs to be done and to be struggling to do it, meanwhile holding firm to positions we have already reached, seems to be no less positively wise and profitable for being the only possibility.[16]

If one substitutes "biological science" for Ramsey's argument concerning "Natural Law," there is a parallel to our purposes here.

The ultimate problem of this aspect of Christian ethics we take to be the relationship of how well the Christian moralist is able to perceive the interrelationships in the formulation of his own approach to ethics, and then how ably he incorporates this information and mutual activity in his discourse on the moral choices confronting modern man. Christian ethics must remain Christian. It would otherwise be obvious that this is true, but in the methodology we have brought to this thesis, it

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[15] Ibid., p. 393

[16] Ibid., p. 396

seems appropriate to emphasize it here. There is a distinctively Christian ethics, a particular attitude and approach to ethical subjects that is rooted in the Christian faith.

> The unique element in Christian character is a thing of the spirit. This does not mean it has a purely divine source as distinguished from natural morality. It is both divine and human in its metaphysical origin. But it has a distinct quality, a unique ethical flavor, that differentiates it from the non-Christian life.[17]

Barth is correct that we should not isolate ethics from its theological source, for that is the source out of which it lives. The proper ethic is related to the key ideas and the essential elements of the Christian faith, as well as to the ideas of the world in which it responds.

What the essential elements are is a matter of controversy. But, in general, it means that Christian ethics will begin with some issues already settled. However apologetic it wishes to be in its task, however far it ranges in either the source or the application of its grounded ultimately in the God who acts with His people in Christ. It brings certain qualifications to any topic that has to do with that relationship and responsibility. It has a definite view of what Man is, hence Christian ethics must reject the reductionist view of man, where men would be reduced to the sum-total of his natural parts.

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[17] Albert C. Knudson, The Principles of Christian Ethics (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1943), p. 162

Man's existence takes place in the Biblical context of the God-man relationship. From the start in Genesis, and through the Old and New Testaments, man is never seen as just man. It is the relationship which God seeks with him and which he in turn seeks with God. The Christian moralist cannot accept a natural morality.

We must seek to be taught as well as teach, to listen as well as to speak. We cannot isolate ourselves in the revelation which we receive about man, and the insights which follow from the multi-revelation and in the descriptive knowledge received in the material facts of life and human nature. Neither Christian ethics, nor the church should make ethical demands on man which are counter to the "necessities" of his life. The catalogue of the sins of mankind throughout the moral history of Christianity has frequently violated that principle, in terms of sexual ethics, in terms of the passive behaviour we associate with good Christianity, and in terms of our categories of works righteousness we have required.

We seek an honest expression which is aligned with man's origin and his destiny: an ethics which will provide a common ground where we can greet the behavioural scientist in humility and with gratitude for his assistance; but where we also come in confidence, with the courage of our Christian faith, to offer our assistance in return.

DR. F.R. TENNANT

IV. CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND THE LIFE SCIENCES

A. F. R. Tennant

1. Introduction and Objectives

Twentieth century British theology has, for the most part, maintained a well-balanced approach to the study of the doctrine of man. Extremism in theology has been more a Continental or American diversion. There is no Karl Barth or Bultmann in Great Britain, but neither was there a Schleiermacher or a Harnack. Usually we have found a succession of capable men whose steady enlargement of relevant and reverent theology holds the theological world-view and God-view in focus. Theologians such as John Oman, Tennant, Charles Gore, William Temple, John and Donald Baillie, H. H. Farmer, etc., have contributed greatly to a theological balance on the doctrine of man. Professor Alan Richardson recently reminded us in a different context, that these theologians "have not allowed us to grow up with childish and uncriticized assumptions about the "god-of-the-gaps," the "need-fulfiller," and the "problem-solver."[1]

Richardson was writing specifically about the rich

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[1]Alan Richardson, "The Death of God Theology," Theology LXXI, p. 16, January, 1968

tradition of philosophical theology in Oman, Tennant, Temple, etc., but the same comment applies also to the nature of man. On the one hand, there has been the continued insistence that man is a created being, made in the image of God with special purposes and responsibilities to that Creator. On the other, man is seen as part of the natural world where his humanity is compatible with his creation.

In this thesis we note the balance in the subject of the origin of human sin and nature of the ethical man. It has been a stormy century since the years just after the publication of Darwin's Origin, and excessive enthusiasm and extremist arguments have not been atypical of the passing decades. Yet Archbishop A. M. Ramsey could write recently that

> On no subject more than that of Sin and the Fall did Anglican theology show through the years the ability to meet the shocks of criticism, to conserve and reinterpret the essence of traditional belief, to be guided by the fundamental findings of Christian consciousness as well as by the data of science, and to avoid entanglement with passing and superficial syntheses.[2]

Even allowing for the possible bias of an Anglican Archbishop, the statement is accurate. It particularly applies to the early writings of Dr. F. R. Tennant on the doctrine of Original Sin and the Fall of Man.

Our objective in including Tennant in this thesis

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[2]Arthur Michael Ramsey, An Era in Anglican Theology: From Gore to Temple (New York: Charles Scribners, 1960), p. 188; American Edition, British Edition: From Gore to Tenyle

is rooted in the relevance of his work to the inter-relationship of science and theology.

(1) We will begin our discussion of the writings of Dr. Tennant where he begins his own ethical enquiry - in the common meeting ground of scientific study and Christian ethics. Our special interest is in Tennant's understanding of the evolutionary origin of man, and man's social growth as he develops his ethical-moral life. Tennant held throughout his writings that no theological ethics could be valid without the empirical data of evolutionary studies. He demands that we take the scientist seriously when we discuss man and his ethical limitations and possibilities.

(2) Secondly, we will stress that Tennant freed the "natural appetites, instincts, and impulses" from any kind of negative moral judgment, and affirmed the natural humanity of man as being the initial source of all his moral behaviour, both that which we call good, and that which we call evil.

(3) Thirdly, it is important to understand the contribution which Tennant made at the beginning of this century, in the situational individuality of Christian moral judgments. One must know the "Individual" natural endowment of individual persons before one can make objective ethical judgments on their behaviour at any stage of their moral development. The accusation has been made, as we will note later on in this writing, that Tennant "atomizes" sin, and endangers the whole doctrine of the universality of sin and the human predicament. Tennant is not final, but

the strength of his argument has been reinforced in recent study.

Lastly, and following from the first three, in addition to some other minor commentary on his thought, we will note that Dr. Tennant provides a usable framework in which an open discussion of human sinfulness in contemporary ethical situations can properly take place.

2. The Common Ground of Science and Theology

Although Tennant continued to publish books up until the time of World War II, when he wrote The Nature of Belief in 1943, we will be dealing mainly with the books which were published in the first decade of this century.[3] These works are concerned more directly with what Tennant thought about man and his moral life. L. D. Scudder has written a most useful volume which discusses some of Tennant's other works as "the best intellectual defense of theism in our time"; in which he analyzed Tennant's two-volumed magnum opus, Philosophical Theology,[4] and of lesser importance, but highly relevant to Tennant's philosophical position, Philosophy of the Sciences.[5]

Aside from Scudder,[6] and a few other references which we will note, Tennant has been largely neglected

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[3] F. R. Tennant (Cambridge: University Press) Origin and Propagation of Sin, 1902; The Concept of Sin, 1912; The Sources of the Doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin, 1903

[4] Tennant, Philosophical Theology (Cambridge: University Press, vol. 1, "The Soul and its Faculties," 1928, reprint 1956; vol. 2, "The World, the Soul, and God," 1930, reprint 1956)

[5] Tennant, Philosophy of the Sciences: Or the Relations Between the Departments of Knowledge (Cambridge: University Press, 1932)

[6] Lewis D. Scudder, Tennant's Philosophical Theology New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940

in our day. It is an especially glaring oversight when we realize how relevantly he is connected to the plethora of books and articles and symposia which have appeared in these recent Post-Teilhardian years. There are a few casual references here and there in Norman Pittenger,[7] as there are those few references already mentioned in A. M. Ramsey. There is a detailed discussion in Professor N. H. G. Robinson's Faith and Duty which we will mention in other parts of this chapter. But in Thomas Langford's recent study of theology in England during 1900 to 1920, e.g., Tennant's name is mentioned only once,[8] and that only as an incidental note regarding a brief comment which Tennant made about the work of John Oman.

In those early books, which were written prior to the years when he was a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, Dr. Tennant was attempting to re-state the Christian understanding of the nature and origin of man and his sin in light of the post-Darwinian evolutionary science. We will note some objections to Tennant's work, both in regard to his own misinterpretations of the evidence and in the limitations which were imposed by the information available in his time; but there is a positive acceptance to be noted at the start of our analysis.

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[7] Pittenger, Christian Understanding, p. 104, p. 976

[8] Thomas A. Langford, In Search of Foundations: English Theology, 1900-1920 (Abingdon Press, 1969), p. 175

We propose here that the attitude and approach which is followed by Tennant throughout his discourse on the subject of man and his sin, could serve as a working model for the way in which the student can approach his contemporary study of the nature of the ethical man. He sought a common meeting place with the science of his day. To go back to Philosophical Theology, which was reprinted in 1957, Tennant described the theory of his approach to any "trustworthy philosophy of human personality and human knowledge."

> There is but one way of inquiring into the nature of the self, whether as knower or as object known . . . It is to set out from the observable facts concerning mentality, as these are constituted at the level of experience -- organization involved in the presumptive knowledge that we employ in the conduct of life; or rather, as they are analyzed and reduced to system in the science of psychology.[9]

After the data have been described fairly, and without preconceived notions regarding what the data can and cannot include, Tennant said: ". . . then, and only then, can we reasonably proceed to consider what implications they contain, and what metaphysical interpretation they may suggest or require."[10]

Tennant likens the empirical data surrounding the nature of man in his existence, to the individual bricks with which the bricklayer builds a house. Each item of

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[9]Tennant, Philosophical Theology, vol. 1, p. 1

[10]Ibid., p. 3

information is like a single brick, and although each brick can be "broken into fragments, ground to dust, or analyzed into chemical elements,"

> We can now no more begin inquiry otherwise than from fact-data, at the stage of elaboration and with degree of compositeness and turbidity with which, as experience units, they are actually received, than a bricklayer can start housebuilding with other units than bricks.[11]

"The earliest, the simplest, the logically prior, the metaphysically ultimate, may be goals: none of them can be datum or a starting point."[12]

> To whatever definition and theory of knowledge in general; and to whatever doctrine of the self, we may be led, such theory must justify itself by its capacity to account for the prima facie facts being what they are.
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> . . . There is no escape from what these prima facie facts dictate, translate them how we may. Without them, as foundation, all building is in the air. They are the sole external control.[13]

Tennant is consistent with that epistemological approach throughout his study of the nature of man and man's moral imperfections. And, although we do not wish here to enter a tedious discussion concerning his phenomenology we do accept that the problem of sin and guilt, and the nature of the ethical man to which they are relevant, should be studied through the empirical data which is discovered in the historical study of evolutionary advance. In one

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[11] Ibid., p. 1

[12] Ibid., pp. 1-2

[13] Ibid., p. 4

of the Cambridge Theological Essays which was published in 1905, Tennant explained that:

> . . . though it does not belong to physical science to dictate ready made ultimate and absolute truths to the theologian or the philosopher, or to presume that her methods can cover the whole ground of research, it is her part, her very important and inalienable privilege, to contribute to philosophy the body of systematic knowledge of nature which she has acquired, and which must not be ignored in the philosopher's elaboration of a unified and complete interpretation of the world.[14]

Physical science itself might not provide a cosmical theory of the nature of man and God and the universe; yet when physical science is absorbed into the wider sphere of philosophy, and when its fundamental principles of knowledge are accepted without denying the individuality of the science, then "A philosophical system, in interpreting nature . . . must take into account the established facts of science, keep in touch with them, and abide by them."[15] No claim is made for natural science above philosophy. Rather, in that Essay, Tennant carefully explains the limitations which science has in the ultimate questions of the origin and nature of the universe. But, he writes, "even if we allow, for the sake of argument, that the material world exists independently of our experience," physical science leads up to and assists in the answers of basic philosophical questions.

Tennant's own understanding of the biological

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[14] H. B. Swete, ed., Essays on Some Theological Questions of the Day (London: Macmillan & Co., 1905), p. 74

[15] Ibid., p. 74

nature of the man was obviously limited in its dependence on the prevailing scholarship of those earlier years. Mendelian genetics, e.g., was only being rediscovered at the time Tennant delivered his Hulsean Lectures at Cambridge in 1900. He was also the debtor, though in some ways also a victim, of the post-Darwinian elevation of the evolutionary process as the panacea for most social, political, philosophical, and ethical problems. His psychological data were pre-Freudian then, for Freud had not yet published a major work, and Freud's important findings related to the origin of conscience and ethical ideals, incorporated into the studies of Professor Waddington and Julian Huxley, were not available at that time.

Tennant was directly interested in the data that were germane to man and his ethical reflection. He was not principally a moralist. It should be noted in passing, for example, that in all his investigations regarding the nature of natural man and his "appetites," Tennant seldom applied his ethical thought to particular moral questions. He mentions only once, e.g., the subject of human sexuality, and ignores other important moral problems completely. Perhaps it was a Victorian reluctance to mention such controversial topics in public, or perhaps it was really that Tennant was so immersed in the examination of the theory of man and his "original sin and fall," that he never fully applied his study to the waiting moral

problems. In either case he succeeded in bringing the insights of the science of his day into his theological and ethical discussions of the concept of sin and morality.

3. The Neutrality of the Natural Life

a. Original Sin

In the period we are considering - 1900 to 1912 - Tennant was occupied mainly with the Doctrine of Sin, and more especially with the Fall and Original Sin. He argued extensively for the justification of his theodicy in The Origin and Propagation of Sin.[16] "The basis of the view was the supposition that the complete theory of evolution applies to man." In that evolutionary origin, man inherits "all of the tendencies of the stock." Such tendencies, however, are neutral and are not given moral value. In that way, Tennant held, the Creator is not charged with creating a man who is sinful at his origin. Neither is original man the perfect righteous being who is headed for destruction and sin as is the case in the interpretations of St. Paul and Augustine. At the start the attributes of man are:

> . . . simply the conditions which render virtue and vice equally a possibility when will and conscience have been acquired.[17]

In The Child and Sin, Tennant dealt directly with Anglican and Presbyterian theology that taught the

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[16] Tennant, Origin, pp. 116 ff.

[17] Ibid., p. 117

original sin of man. The former declares that "fault and corruption of the nature of man" inclines man to evil, "so that flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and therefore, every person born into the world, deserveth God's wrath and damnation." (Ninth Article) The Westminster Confession goes further still: Adam and Eve "became wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind . . . the same . . . corrupted nature was conveyed to their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation . . . we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil . . ." But, declares Tennant, since the doctrine of special creation has been abandoned "in light of modern scientific knowledge" the moral fall has been discredited.[18]

The child's basic nature is neutral, Tennant continued. All of his instincts are natural and necessary to life. The propensities of the infant will plunge him into an arduous and never-ending struggle when he receives his moral sense; but the natural attributes which have been associated with "the Ape and the Tiger" cannot be classified as things "which ought not to be."[19] And,

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[18] Tennant, The Child and Religion (London: Williams and Norgate, 1905), ed. Thomas Stephens, chapter 4, "The Child and Sin", p. 160

[19] Ibid., p. 168

unless we rob ethical terms of all significance, we cannot regard them as of the nature of sin.[20]

As in both major books, Tennant notes in this article, that "Our virtues and vices have common roots, and what shall grow from these roots depends on the action of the will alone."[21] So "The ecclesiastical doctrine of original sin is to be repudiated entirely," and the argument should rest on the following three points:

(1) What we inherited from our ancestors cannot be classed as sin, but only non-moral tendencies.

(2) Sin is not due to a fall at all, but to the outcome of the nature of our development and social heredity.

(3) All of our "stock tendencies" are to be traced back to our non-human ancestry.

Prior to the first man, and certainly prior to our direct lineage, there were present behavioural tendencies which helped to form what now we call homo sapiens. This is not to say that sin is simply an atavistic reminder of what once we were; it is only to say that all of his traits came along when man was formed:

> Since we have come to believe in the animal origin of man's physical nature, we are compelled to regard these appetites, with all their intensity, as a survival whose presence is inevitable and a part of the course of Nature.[22]

According to Tennant, man begins morally neutral

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[20] Ibid., p. 170

[21] Ibid., p. 171

[22] Ibid., p. 167

and the "sin" with which he is later charged cannot be said to be present at the time of man's origin. The question then arises as to when and where sin comes into the experience of man. Tennant answered in general that sin comes later within the lifetime of the species as well as with each individual man. Moral codes place man under a responsibility to obey, and each man elects to be disobedient in the presence of an actual possibility to obey; and thereby each individual is responsible for his own sin. The objection is raised immediately that Tennant thereby endangers the universality of man's sinfulness, and that an "atomic view of sin" results, instead of the solidarity of the race. In answer Tennant appended an extended footnote in the Origin and Propagation of Sin, which argues for a modified version at least, of the universality and solidarity of human sinfulness.

> This inheritance, universally received by individual men, is sufficient to reconcile the universality of sinfulness with individual freedom of will; and it implies that the human race is "one great organic whole."[23]

The moral solidarity of the race, to Tennant, is not based on inborn sinfulness, or on some Original Sin of Adam that is transmitted to all future generations through some physical or spiritual inheritance. He refers to actual sin alone, "to environment and not to physical nature." In fact, it becomes a universal. He attempts to avoid

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[23]Tennant, Origin and Propagation of Sin, p. 223

both the atomism of Pelagius and the Original Righteousness and inherited guilt and sin of Augustine and the traditional doctrine. The natural inheritance is neutral.

> It is neither true that man is born bad, "with his whole essence shattered and unsound," in consequence of his organic connection with previous generations, nor, as Rousseau taught, that man is born good and depraved by society. He is born normal and neutral and, influenced more or less according to circumstances by society, makes himself bad or good.[24]

Even though it comes from a "natural" source the universality is not denied. In Concept of Sin, Tennant wrote that

> The notion that human nature, as God made it, must have been originally characterized by unruffled harmony . . . is one of those reverently but gratuitously and misguidedly invented conceits with which theology has burdened itself and hampered with its progress in the past.[25]

There is an alternative, Tennant believed, to both the Doctrine of the Fall and the solidarity involved there, and the atomistic conception of the race which is associated with Pelagius. It begins with the understanding of what man receives in his original state: the impulses, instincts, etc. All men receive the same, "Universally received by individual men," and that combination of inheritances which all men receive and through which all men will sin in time, "is sufficient to reconcile the

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[24] Ibid., p. 224

[25] Tennant, Concept of Sin, p. 146

universality of sinfulness with individual freedom of the will." The argument is tedious but important.

First, all men are one in their shared inheritance; and second, moral solidarity is achieved in the "influence which the members of society have on one another."[26]

> Our free-will is conditioned not only by our common nature, but also by our nurture. The world is a moral order, and there is a sense in which "sin is in each the work of all and in all the work of each." Though each of us has a unique individuality and inviolable responsibility, yet our being is not capable of being wholly sundered from that of our fellows.[27]

"We are linked both to the process of nature and to the chain of human sins and sorrows." . . . "this kind of solidarity refers to actual sin alone, to environment and not to physical nature,"[28] but it is still a universal trait of all men.

Tennant emphasizes this "social nature of human life and the organic unity of the race" in his critique of Immanuel Kant. Tennant finds Kant's views partly compatible with his own. Neither accepts the Doctrine of Original Sin, and both locate the origin of moral failure in the willful act of the individual. Neither locates sin in the natural tendencies of men:

> The ground of evil, he (Kant) teaches, does not lie in any object or instinct; it is not to be regarded as a natural characteristic of our species. We, and not our nature, are responsible for its

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[26]Tennant, Origin and Propagation, p. 223

[27]Ibid., p. 224

[28]Ibid., p. 224

> existence, simply because we are conscious that it ought not to be.[29]

To Kant, writes Tennant, "Evil is brought about when a man adopts the impulses of his sense-nature, rather than the dictates of his reason."[30] Later, Tennant observes that Kant has not emphasized the social nature of human life and there denies the organic unity of the race. Kant, says Tennant, in the end, atomizes sin.

> Kant of course abundantly recognizes the universality of sin; but it is for him merely an empirical truth, an induction from observation, to which there is no reason to assert an exception. His explanation of it is even more entirely individualistic than the ancient doctrine of Pelagius.[31]

"In all this Kant was the expression of the individualism of his day."[32] Kant could not do justice to the social side of man and his integral unity with the race of mankind. Tennant levels the identical criticism of the individuality or "atomization" of sin which has since been charged against Tennant himself by Williams, Robinson, and others.

In his Preface to the Second Edition of Origin and Propagation, written six years later, Tennant answers some earlier critics who charged that he endangered the Doctrines of Grace and Atonement when he denied original sin,as in Augustine. Tennant responded:

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[29] Ibid., p. 50

[30] Ibid., p. 52

[31] Ibid., pp. 57-58

[32] Ibid., p. 58

> With regard to the bearing of the evolutionary theory of sin on the Doctrines of Grace and Atonement, I can only repeat what I have said before: that these are not in the least endangered, because they have their sufficient basis in the fact of universal actual sinfulness, and are independent of theories as to how sin takes its rise.[33]

All men are in need of Christ's redemption because all men have sinned. "The fact of universal actual sinfulness" was believed throughout by Tennant. His argument was simply to deny that man was sinful in his evolutionary origin. It was to make the origin of sin neutral and to assign moral value only to the actual, although universal, sinfulness of man.

Moral status, says Tennant, is acquired gradually, as the moral conscience and development of the individual and the race occurs.

> Moral sensibility emerges in the course of mental education, and the content of the ethical ideal is the later gift of social heredity, for which physical heredity only supplies the empty and bare necessity.[34]

Tennant locates the origin, as well as the continuation of sin, in "the individual will as it is influenced by its social environment." Evil and moral imperfection cannot be said to be the results of a transition from a man originally good who fell into natural sin. "Good and bad are alike the results of volitional reaction upon what is ethically neutral."[35] The individual discovers

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[33] Ibid., Preface, p. xii

[34] Ibid., p. 117

[35] Ibid., p. 118

that he is sinful: "He does not rightly find himself to have been sinful."

The idea of a growing awareness of the origin of sin, and the emphasis on the social heredity involved, is a combination of ideas that would be compatible with the kind of latter reasoning of scientific ethical thinkers such as Julian Huxley and Professor Waddington, both of whom emphasize the importance of the "cultural heredity" and the "socio-genetic transmission" of character traits in the formulation of "ethical" behaviour.

According to his critics, Tennant missed the integral understanding of the objectivity of sin in its universality. In spite of the careful reasoning behind his argument of a "universally experienced sin," some have objected that there is no theoretical or logical necessity that man would sin, or that sin exists independently of the judgment which men make regarding it. It was argued in Evolution and the Need of Atonement, that the inherent universality was a necessary item of doctrine before one could speak with meaning about the necessity of the reconciling work of Jesus Christ, in death as well as life. Bicknell wrote that Tennant made a false assumption when " . . . he (Tennant) treated sin primarily from the point of view of the moral philosopher, not the theologian. Sin is to him first and foremost moral evil."[36] Tennant, says Bicknell,

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[36] Stewart A. McDowall, Evolution and the Need for Atonement (Cambridge: University Press, 1914)

does not understand the theological meaning of sin or its necessity in the basic pattern of Christian theology. Bicknell objects that Tennant sees sin as a kind of improper choice, or a wrong kind of decision. "Its relation to God he treats as secondary."[37]

> Dr. Tennant has fallen into the error of Pelagius, an atomic view of humanity. St. Augustine, with all his exaggeration, held fast to a real truth. Sin stretches out farther than the individual will. The term cannot rightly be confined to actual sin. The individual is estranged from God by something wider than his own personal disobedience.[38]

N. P. Williams joins Bicknell in his attack on the theological support for Tennant's understanding of the origin of sin. But, unlike Bicknell, Williams concludes that Tennant has made God the author of sin. He (Tennant) "does not logically exempt the Almighty from responsibility for causing evil."[39]

> If man's nature is a "chaos not yet reduced to order," and if the hypothesis of a "fall" of any kind can be ruled out, we can only suppose that man started his career as a "chaos" because God willed that he should so start . . . and earlier that the will of God immanent in organic evolution has brought man into existence with a secret flaw in his soul which sooner or later betrays him into actual sin.[40]

The problem with Williams' criticism is that he has overlooked the evolutionary origin of Tennant's man. The "flaw of chaos," referred to by Williams, does not

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[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid., pp 36-37

[39] N. P. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1927), p. 532

[40] Ibid., p. 532

acknowledge the neutrality of man's natural being in Tennant and the "social" creation of the universality of sin. Neither, of course, does it overcome the reverse objection that the first man Adam who in the Genesis was created pure and perfect by God, and then later fell from grace, was also created with a similar irreversible ability to choose the sin.

One main objection which Tennant had to the Doctrine of Original Sin is that the traditional doctrine was conceived before Darwin; but with evolution, "there has also emerged an alternative view of man's original condition." What if he were flesh before he was spirit?[41] What if he were "in what we call sin" before he supposedly "fell"? To Tennant, man was originally without laws to govern his moral action. He responded as an organism fulfilling his "natural" life, the life which presumably was willed for him by God at that time. When his moral consciousness was awakened, he became aware of good and evil. Tennant wrote:

> The increased light which has been thrown upon the early history of mankind, not to speak of the continuity of the human species with those lower in the scale of animal life, compels us to entertain the conviction that what was once necessarily received as a genuine tradition is rather, transfigured and spiritualized, the product of primitive speculation, on a matter beyond the reach of human memory.[42]

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[41] Tennant, Origin and Propagation, p. 11

[42] Ibid., p. 265

So, concludes Tennant, "The Doctrine of Original Sin, insofar as it implies original guilt in the natural origin of man, stands self-condemned."[43]

If one accepts biological evolution as an explanation for the way in which man arrived on the earth, then one must also accept the natural inclinations of man, which lead to what we call "sin" and "moral guilt," as a part of man's natural endowment. The origin of sin then, cannot be located in a fall from a state of human perfection where his natural endowments would have been suppressed.

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A different kind of criticism is leveled against Tennant by Professor N. H. G. Robinson in his excellent and insightful treatment of the theological doctrine of sin in Faith and Duty. There are two related parts of Robinson's objection to Tennant which are relevant to our chapter. The second we discuss later,[44] regarding Tennant's "atomic" view of sin, when we turn to the strength of Tennant in what we call "the individuality of moral judgment." Robinson's prior criticism applies directly here.

In Faith and Duty, Professor Robinson is concerned with the theological problem of sin, and more especially with the specific problem of "holding together

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[43] Ibid., p. 102

[44] Cf. pages 263 ff. in this thesis

the universality of sin and man's responsibility for it." Robinson's objection is that while Tennant saw the one side of the problem clearly (man's responsibility for his own sin), according to Robinson, Tennant ignored the other. To Robinson, Tennant has tried to escape the dilemma by "surrendering the idea of strict universality" by "substituting for it an empirical universality subject to all sorts of qualifications." Writes Robinson:

> Whenever man's freedom not to sin is emphasized, as in Tennant's treatment of the subject, sin itself becomes an accidental and contingent feature of man's life, and then the affirmation, that all men sin becomes no more than a provisional and entirely empirical declaration. Its universality, in other words, is not a genuine universality and many theologians feel that such a statement fails to do justice to the grim reality of sin."[45]

"Sin" to Robinson, is a prior claim which theologians make independently from any natural setting or empirical investigations so that even if Tennant had been successful in proving a universality of human sin and a moral solidarity of the race, the proof would still be inconclusive because the subject of human sin and man's need of redemption is not a proper matter for empirical evidence. To Robinson, Tennant endangers our moral solidarity -- the verified universality of sin and sinfulness -- because Tennant assumes that the strength (or lack of it) in the doctrine of "original sin" is subject to empirical evidence and not to a prior belief that all men have

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[45] N. H. G. Robinson, Faith and Duty (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1950; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), p. 127

sinned. To Robinson, it is "by faith that we know all men are sinful."[46]

"The raison d'etre of the incarnation and the atonement cannot be a capricious, accidental and contigent feature of man's life.[47] It is a genuinely Christian insight that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."[48]

> Dr. Tennant's explanation is a perfectly good explanation of the universality of sin, if that universality is merely empirical; and the fact that we feel that it is not a good explanation, that something essential has been sacrificed even by the general outline, is an indication that the universality of sin is not just empirical after all.[49]

The concern of Professor Robinson is not the specific concern of our thesis' topic. His objection to Tennant raises other problems that must find solutions elsewhere. It is not an objection that would radically alter our approach to the contribution which Tennant makes to this thesis. The question under discussion is Tennant's rejection of the Doctrine of Original Sin. Tennant's main concern meanwhile is not the question of whether man is universally sinful or not -- although he is careful to deal with that problem. What he is arguing is that man's original defects, and his corresponding and

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[46] Ibid., p. 130

[47] Ibid., p. 131

[48] Ibid., p. 116

[49] Ibid., p. 116

universal sinfulness, cannot be associated with man's original nature. Man cannot be held accountable for his nature endowments, out of which the decisions of life are made, and some of which are judged "sinful."

Robinson notes correctly that:

> Dr. Tennant finds serious difficulties covering the original state of innocence, the entry into this state of sin, and the radical dislocation of human nature wrought by this one sin -- finally the transmission of this acquired defect.[50]

and further that:

> Sin is empirically universal, not because we have inherited a corrupt nature from our common ancestor, but because we are all confronted by the same uneasy task through our common descent.[51]

and finally, Tennant is quoted as holding that:

> We must learn to talk not of man's fall, but of his slow and painful rise above the non-moral level of his animal ancestry. . . . Theology should speak in terms of the difficulties and dangers of man's rise instead of the miseries of his fall.

Professor Robinson has a bias against the use of evolutionary theory in the problem of ethics. He writes of the importance of Tennant even though "with the passing of time it becomes increasingly difficult to suppose that the doctrine of evolution holds the clue to many of our most stubborn intellectual problems."[52] The "passing of time" has indeed helped to eliminate the doctrine of evolutionary origin of man from being

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[50] Ibid., p. 114

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., p. 112

offered as a panacea for all social, ethical and intellectual problems, as we have already shown. But the passing of the years since the early part of this century has also shown the increasing importance of understanding man as an evolutionary being and of showing how critical the passage from non-human to human is in our discussions of man's ethical possibilities. At that point, Professor Robinson has dismissed man's natural progression as being irrelevant to the discussion. Tennant's problem is to justify his "empirically universal" doctrine of sin. But Professor Robinson's problem is how to include man's existence and the origin of his moral and ethical capabilities.

But, to return to our argument regarding the moral solidarity of the race, I am indebted to Professor Robinson for his clarification of the changing emphasis regarding the inevitability of universal sinfulness between The Origin and Propagation (first edition 1902) and The Concept of Sin (1912). Robinson notes that:

> Dr. Tennant has indeed described sin as "empirically inevitable" but in his later work he withdraws that misleading and perhaps self-contradictory expression and says instead, concerning sin, that it is stupendously difficult wholly to avoid it throughout a lifetime.[53]

Both Robinson and Tennant agree that each man is and must be accountable for individual responsibility in committing sins. The point of difference is in how we

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[53] Ibid., p. 115

can judge that all men are sinful (or every man is sinful) and in need of redemption.

A further point should be made completing this aspect of Robinson's objection to Tennant. While Robinson has read Tennant correctly and has evaluated him fairly, we must emphasize that Tennant is not arguing for a "sinless man." Tennant allows throughout for two different kinds of judgment regarding man's sinfulness. There is a "theological" judgment that all have sinned. The moral law to a theologian, as opposed to a moralist, is an ideal given by God.

Tennant writes that "The sinner's responsibility, again, is derived from God, and it is to God his judge that he holds himself accountable."[54] Tennant distinguished between sins as morals and sin as a theological concept. His work is primarily ethical and for "ethical sin" to be present, man must be a properly knowledgeable moral agent (or at the least be potentially knowledgeable). Theological judgments on sin could be something else entirely. With all that said, each man in Tennant still falls short of the Biblical admonition to be perfect and fails against the highest ideals which we see in the life of Jesus Christ and his perfect obedience.

More specifically, one point of Robinson's objection has to do with Tennant's theoretical possibility

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[54]Tennant, Concept of Sin, p. 20

that any given man, might on a thorough empirical examination, be judged to be without sin. From our point of view, one could wish that Tennant had been more specific and more careful. But our wish has nothing to do with what Tennant actually wrote. In Note C, attached to The Concept of Sin, he does partially vindicate himself and eliminates some of the objection. He does write, as Robinson noted, only of "the stupendous difficulty of a sinless human life,"[55] and never actually reiterates the "empirical impossibility of avoiding sin" of the earlier book. Later he affirms the theoretical possibility that since each life has not been examined in detail, "we can never be sure that in favorable circumstances, there have not been cases in which a shorter or longer life has wholly escaped being marred by sin."[56]

Admittedly, Tennant does not enlarge upon the issue, but the logical progression of his thought would indicate that however we decide that man is universally in need of redemption -- whether we know it by faith or by empirical evidence, in Eden or in the development of human moral codes, all men are equally in need of God's forgiveness and of Christ's redemption. Tennant never does in fact eliminate, except for the theoretical possibility of elimination, any active individual from the onus of individual and universal need. However,

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[55] Ibid., p. 263

[56] Ibid., p. 268

each man becomes aware of his sinfulness, all who are aware know that all men have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

In his detailed summary at the end of Note C, he shows his purpose specifically when he writes that we can still hold that every other member of the human race has sinned.

> To sum up: the doctrine of the universality of sin must be deprived of its borrowed semblance of absoluteness, must sharply be distinguished from the assertion of universal imperfection, and must be dissociated from exaggerated notions concerning sinfulness in its lower degrees, for the rest, the generality of sinfulness finds its sufficient explanation in the moral psychology and solidarity of the race in respect of conative propensities. Self-knowledge is adequate to enable us to understand the sinfulness of every other member of the human family.[57]

In context Tennant is concerned with the subject of ethical condemnation in original man. One point he is presenting is that non-moral agents (for example, the original men, infants who die, etc.) have committed sins simply by virtue of being alive. More than a belief in man's original sin is required to deal with sin and moral evil.

> Unless ethics partakes of the abstractness of all deductive or pure sciences, it must concern itself with and apply its norms to, data provided from the field of the actual. It must take human nature as it finds it. Before it can discuss the ideal life forces in men it must raise the previous question: What is man's nature and mental constitution?[58]

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[57] Ibid., p. 272

[58] Ibid., p. 125

and to sum up:

> A concept of sin such as shall be of universal application must be framed in the light of the indisputable facts that man is conscious before he is self-conscious, impulsively appetitive before he is volitional and volitional before he is moral.[59]

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[59] Ibid., p. 155

b. The Propagation of Sin

The second item in the traditional doctrine of original sin which comes under Tennant's scrutiny is the propagation of sin from one generation to the next, ad infinitum. Beyond the origin of sin itself, Tennant argues further against "sin" being transmitted from one generation to the next in the biological heredity of the human race. He used a biological argument from genetics to support the argument that there can be no "spiritual" transmission from parent to offspring - a transmission which Tennant felt was essential to the traditional Christian doctrine. He did not deny that mental and/or dispositions towards certain character traits were passed from one generation to the next, for Galton and Ribot had already taught him that "talents, tastes, strength or weakness of emotions and passions"[60] were transmittable. Tennant insisted that these transmissions "take place only in the form of modified physical structure . . . mediated solely through the body."[61] Professor Ladd in Philosophy of Mind made the same point.

> No previous mental activity, or conscious state, can really be connected with the following activities and states as their progenitor, so as to explain the

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[60] Ibid., p. 35

[61] Ibid.

genesis of the latter.[62]

Tennant's evidence is an adaptation of the old controversy over the inheritance of acquired characteristics, which we noted in Lamarck, who taught that characteristics acquired during the lifetime of an individual could be transmitted to the individual's offspring.[63] In the years just preceding the writing of The Origin and Propagation of Sin, Spencer[64] and Haeckel and others had adopted the Lamarckian view to support a preferential social philosophy which favoured the established power. The evidence at that time was not conclusive but Tennant sided with the opponents of Lamarck, and thus is in line with what we now know to be true. He was cautious to point out that:

> . . . the a priori proposition that acquired characters cannot be inherited is not wholly justified in the present state of knowledge.[65]

But he goes on in the same paragraph to imply that because of "the ever-increasing skepticisms," it one day would be justified.

> . . . It is almost impossible to conceive the nature of a mechanism whereby a specific effect produced upon any organism could so modify its reproductive organs as to cause a corresponding modification in the offspring.[66]

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[62] Ibid., pp. 32-33, quoted by Tennant

[63] Ibid., p. 37

[64] Cf. Spencer, p. 103 ff of this thesis

[65] Tennant, Concept of Sin, p. 37

[66] Ibid., p. 37

In The Fall and Original Sin, Tennant suggested that to understand the meaning of Genesis III, we have to begin in Genesis itself, and not in later Biblical elaborations or interpretations:

> In the narrative, there is no hint that Adam's moral condition was fundamentally altered by disobedience. . . . Punishment is physical, not eternal. The idea that his sin is passed to all succeeding generations does not appear in the narrative.
>
> It is to be concluded then, from exegetical grounds alone, that the lust contained in Genesis III was not intended by its ultimate compiler to supply an explanation of the cause of universal sinfulness.[67]

This issue of the inheritance of sin was so important to Tennant that in his appended Note D, he summarized the topic of the inheritance of acquired characteristic as it then stood:

"(1) A change in conditions cannot affect the next generation unless the reproductive organs are affected; (2) from a consideration of the facts of the case it is almost inconceivable that the effect produced upon any organ of a given organism by a change of conditions should so modify the reproductive organs of that organism as to lead to a corresponding modification in the offspring without the latter being exposed to the same conditions; (3) the only effects which are certainly known of changed conditions upon the reproductive organs are the production of sterility and an increase in genetic variability."[68] That was a competent summary in light

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[67] Tennant, Fall and Original Sin, p. 11

[68] Tennant, Origin and Propagation of Sin, note D, pp. 176-180

of what could have been known at the turn of the century.

It was important to Tennant but not because it helped to solve a problem of biological evolution. It was the theological by-product which prompted him to enter the argument. To Tennant, as to others, the Christian doctrine of the fall and original sin depended on that sin and guilt being passed from Adam to each succeeding generation. He thought that if he could prove scientifically that "sin" could not be transmitted genetically from one generation to another, he would have removed another support for the doctrine of original sin itself. It was Tennant's way of holding the individual's responsibility for his own sin. Tennant thought that if sin cannot be transmitted genetically from parent to child, then original sin is not a tenable doctrine, either scientifically or theologically, and each individual will remain responsible for his own sin.

In Evolution and the Need of Atonement, Professor Bicknell noted his difference with Tennant regarding original sin and inheritance of "acquired characteristics." Bicknell said that while the majority of theologians have taught that each man inherits from his parents sinful tendencies, and that each man receives a nature that is basically disordered, Tennant has argued that this is "scientifically impossible." Bicknell challenged Tennant:

> Dr. Tennant states this with great confidence but his position is by no means so secure as his book suggests. An important school of biologists holds

> that satisfactory evidence has not been produced of the inheritance of acquired characteristics. The whole subject is very complicated and still under discussion.[69]

That "important school of biology," as we have shown earlier,[70] has not produced "satisfactory evidence" that acquired characteristics can be inherited. Quite the contrary. Bicknell, not Tennant, is incorrect.

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[69] McDowall, Evolution and Need for Atonement, p. 40

[70] See pages circa 62

c. The Origin of Sin

To move back to the development of Tennant's thought, he has argued in the first instance that man in his natural state cannot be considered sinful on the basis of his natural endowments. Neither can we hold to a transmission of Adam's sin genetically to all future generations. Tennant then goes on to establish his own thought on the origin of sin itself from an evolutionary viewpoint. Tennant argued that if we accept that man arrived on earth as the culmination of a long process of natural evolution, then we must accept that more than his physical nature has evolved. We must look to the extra-physical attributes which arise in the pre-human evolution, with a view toward determining how they affect man qua man. If one rejects the fall and original sin, what can be substituted for a theory of the origin and propagation of sin?

Tennant begins his answer with an acceptance of the natural instincts and impulses of man as part of the procedure by which man became man.

> The instincts belong to man as God made him, and are to be controlled in proportion as the moral law becomes the more exacting because the more elaborately developed and the more expressly associated with religion embracing the whole of life.[71]

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[71]Tennant, Origin and Propagation of Sin, p. 93

Natural instincts and impulses are waiting to be moralized by the arising moral consciousness which comes after them. They may become good or evil. The conflict and the resulting moral disorder come in the process of human development. As Galton wrote:

> We, men of the present centuries, are like animals suddenly transplanted among new conditions of climate and food; our instincts fail us under the altered circumstances.[72]

Our nature and nurture are necessarily at cross-purposes, and sin arises, not of necessity alone, but "from their necessary conflict." "Evil is not the result of a transition from the good, but good and bad are alike voluntary developments from what is ethically neutral."[73] Sin, or the original sin, from this point of view, does not consist in any particular deed which man has never performed before, but is a result of the moralizing influence of the social environment, even a "sanction of rank as low as that of a tribal custom." It begins at the first point when man - or men - declared that a morally neutral act was wrong. In his analysis of the ethical teaching of Jesus, Tennant concludes that:

> So much, then, may be gathered from the Gospels as to our Lord's conception of sin; and it would seem enough to enable us to infer that for Him, "sin" only included, and only could include, activities contrary to the known law or will of God, for which the agent

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[72]Francis Galton, Hereditary Genius (London: Macmillan & Co., 1869), p. 349, quoted in Origin and Propagation of Sin by Tennant, p. 112

[73]Tennant, Origin and Propagation of Sin, p. 115

> is, in the sight of God, in some degree responsible or accountable.[74]

His moral life begins in the consciousness that some things are "right" and some "wrong." From that point forward his moral life begins and he is, of necessity, involved in a lasting series of struggles as his natural propensities have to be measured and evaluated in accordance with the requirements of an ideal or a moral law,[75] which he discovers as his vision increases.

> Instead of resorting to a hypothetical previous existence or extra-temporal self-decision . . . can we assign the rise of evil itself simply to the difficulty of the task which has to be encountered by every individual person alike, the task of enforcing his inherited organic nature to obey a moral law which he has only gradually been able to discern?"[76]

Tennant's answer is in the affirmative. "Social heredity"[77] is the phrase Tennant uses to describe origin of sin. Moral guilt comes in the expanding process of evolution itself; in what Teilhard de Chardin later called the realm of "noösphere."

> It is with difficulty that our natural, non-moral tendencies are moralized or brought under the dominion of the higher nature; and every failure in the attempt, or every conscious desistance from the struggle, is sin.[78]

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[74]Tennant, Concept of Sin, pp. 28-29

[75]Tennant, Origin and Propagation of Sin, p. 99

[76]Ibid., p. 81

[77]The idea of "social heredity" is also developed in the article "The Child and Sin," in The Child and Religion, ed. Thomas Stephens.

[78]Tennant, Origin and Propagation of Sin, p. 84

To elaborate, Tennant defined the source of sin in the preface to the second edition of Origin and Propagation:[79]

> First: Man inherits the natural and essential instincts and impulses of his animal ancestors. These are necessarily non-moral, and there is no reason to ascribe to them any kind of abnormality.
>
> Second: Voluntary action in man appears before any consciousness of right or wrong. There has been a period therefore in the history of both race and individual in which even volitional conflict has been innocent, however far such conduct differs from that later prescribed by moral actions and the conscience.
>
> (So far, sin has not emerged at all)
>
> Third: A period is reached during which moral sentiment is gradually evoked and moral sanctions are gradually constructed. Acts once knowing no law now begin to be regarded as wrong. The performance of them henceforth constitutes sin.
>
> Fourth: The earliest sanctions known to the race were but crudely ethical, and their crudity was but gradually exchanged for the refinement characteristic of highly developed morality.
>
> Fifth: Christianity has erected an absolute ethical standard and any falling short of that standard in any human being at any stage of his existence or development is therefore asserted to be necessarily sinful.

These ideas are more fully developed in The Concept of Sin, published ten years later. The book itself has a three-part purpose which Tennant explains as the necessary elements in the concept of sin:[80]

> (1) the fundamental element in a concept of sin is derived from Christian theology "in light of revealed truth concerning God's attitude to human sinfulness."

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[79] Ibid., xxii, ff.

[80] Tennant, Concept of Sin, p. 14

(2) We can proceed further to enlarge and define its connotation by incorporating elements such as ethical science finds compatible.

(3) Finally, inasmuch as ethical judgment on the mental activities of a moral subject sometimes presupposes an accurate psychological knowledge and analysis of the conscious processes resulting in these activities, we must also add the science of psychology to the number of those which control our freedom to fashion or refashion our conception of sin.

It is the last which is the special concern of this thesis and where Tennant becomes useful to it. We would not deny that in Christian ethics the light of revealed truth concerning God's attitude to human sinfulness is of first importance. Nor should we wish to pass over or treat lightly the contributions of ethical science, as Barth and others have tried to do. But these belong to another area of study. It is the "science of psychology" which was the principal interest of Dr. Tennant and which is the interest of this thesis.

By the "science of psychology" Tennant meant the whole study of the character, personality, and behaviour of man. Tennant proposed that this science belongs at the very center of our Christian ethical discussions. In a chapter entitled "The Conflict of Impulse and Reason" Tennant notes that ethics must also presuppose a knowledge of the empirical facts. An ethics which is based either in the revealed word of God, or in man's reason is mistaken unless it is also grounded in the facts of existence. "Knowledge of what ought to be, when we come to the details of actual conduct, must very largely be derived

from, or based upon knowledge of what is."[81] For ethics must take human nature as it finds it, as it actually is, not as a moralist postulates that it ought to be. Tennant believed that before we can discuss the ideal life we must raise the previous question: "What is man's nature and mental constitution?"[82] Unless ethics is to consist of mere barren tautologies, it must be based not alone on some general principles of metaphysics, but also "upon the study of human nature in its concrete empirical entirety, as it reveals itself to students of psychology, sociology and anthropology."[83] Psychological facts and metaphysical principles are not alternatives for the study of ethics. Both are essential. Theology depends on both to complete its ethical approach. "Our purpose," writes Tennant,

> is to determine what elements are essential to a logically perfect concept of actual sin such as shall be based on the knowledge of human nature that is available to us at the present day, and shall at the same time satisfy the requirements of distinctively Christian theology and ethics.[84]

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[81] Ibid., p. 125

[82] Ibid., p. 125

[83] Ibid., p. 126

[84] Ibid., p. 89

d. The Origin of the Moral Life

The origin of morality is a social creation. It can only begin to be a possibility when man becomes a social being and when evolution has moved into its psychosocial phase. Man arose with those same propensities "inherited from an animal ancestry, which are at once necessary and normal"; and upon the animal nature is superimposed the endowment which constitutes "the 'divine image' in man, namely volition and moral reason."[85] The instincts and appetites were developed in the long process of animal evolution to suit the animal whose behaviour is "largely automatic," said Tennant. They were not developed "with the ulterior end of making moral life easy for a posterity which was to be additionally endowed with will, reason, and conscience." As we have noted:

> The notion that human nature, as God made it, must have been originally characterized by unruffled harmony . . . is one of those reverently but gratuitously and misguidedly invented conceits with which theology has burdened itself and hampered its progress in the past.[86]

The moral life represents a continuing process of socialization and in consequence of the fact that "man is the kind of being he is, it consists largely in the inhibition of impulsive tendencies which are natural,

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[85] Ibid., pp. 146-47

[86] Ibid., p. 146

normal and inevitable."[87] The conflict between impulse and reason, between desire and conscience, "is a condition requisite for the very possibility of human morality."[88]

There is some ambiguity in what Tennant seems to mean by "sins" which the individual actually commits. Sin, itself, arises in the process after human reason and moral awareness become part of the mental and emotional equipment of man. That is clear. But Tennant is not concerned with practical morality and does not elaborate on acts which we call sinful. He does not use the normal categories, and ignores reference, e.g., to all those which have to do with sexual morality, save a few oblique references to "passion" or "natural appetites" scattered throughout the text.

The ambiguity arises when we examine more closely the description he gives to the origin of the moral struggle in each individual as well as in the race. At one point, he posits "man's original brutishness," which must be matched against the more traditional view of the "unsullied goodness" of man.

> Morality consists in the formation of the non-moral material of nature into character in subjecting "the seething and tumultuous life of natural tendency, of appetite and passion, affection and desire" to the moulding influence of reflective purpose.[89]

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[88] Ibid., p. 146

[89] Ibid., p. 109

The moral life, he says, will largely be the "inhibition of impulsive tendencies which are natural, normal and inevitable."

We can credit Tennant with neutralizing the moral qualities of the impulses. But, when it seems to follow that morality is the check on this "brutishness of nature"; and that our "lowly appetites" must be curbed, and when our "nature and our nuture are at cross-purposes with each other," and when the "seething, tumultuous life of natural tendencies, appetites and passions" must be overcome; we note that Dr. Tennant allows for the belief that the "natural man" and his "natural desires" could actually be immoral. Again, in his article on "The Child and Sin," Tennant uses similar terminology:

> Into the "seething and tumultuous life of natural tendency, of appetite and passion, affection and desire," is introduced the new-born moral purpose, which must struggle to win the ascendency. And this fact alone would seem to supply a sufficient explanation of the universality of human sinfulness.[90]

It is one thing to say that man and his impulses are neutral. It is quite another to enumerate the graphic kinds of beastliness which must be conquered. He does admit that these same tendencies also make for what we call goodness, yet many cited references are to what must be subdued.

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[90] Tennant, Child and Religion, chapter 4, "The Child and Sin", pp. 178-179

The alternative is not of course to declare that natural appetites are entirely good in themselves. That he never does. But it might be to say specifically that our natural impulses and appetites - things such as human sexuality, aggression, altruism, tribal and family ties - are wholesome and are the source of the beauty and goodness we find in life; and that their proper exercise, not their elimination, is the key to understanding human morality.

Tennant mentions the subject of sex specially only in "The Child and Sin," where he writes: "The appetite of sex, which is developed in early childhood, is not necessary, like those of hunger and thirst, to the life of the individual; but it is essential to the life of the species."[91] The statement itself is quite clear. But, it is really not clear just what Tennant intends in this reference. He could mean that the expression of sex is not part of the natural make-up of the individual, but only a procreative aspect of the species. But that would contradict his understanding of the impulsive nature of human existence. The Victorian ethos is no doubt the source of the trouble. To pretend that there is something so critical to the whole personality as sex which could be removed from the discussions of sin, its origin, the nature of man, basic instincts, is a misleading "sign of his time."

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[91] Ibid., pp. 65-66

e. The "Will" as a Moral Agent

Tennant tied his discussion of the origin of the moral life directly to his understanding of the "Will." It is not the natural attributes or the psychological possibilities which bring moral value, but the use which is made of them by the Will.

> Ethics, in the strict sense, has no concern with the 'talents,' their nature and amount, committed to an individual, nor with the total to which they contribute; its evaluation is applicable only to the volitional use made of them.[92]

It would not matter how the act itself appeared to one outside of the decision which prompted it. A person who is endowed with the natural disposition and an agreeable personality, which might be supportive of an acceptable moral life, should not be judged good on the basis of what he does, or because of any intrinsic goodness in the act itself. It would be evaluated only on the basis of what the person had freely willed himself. For, says Tennant:

> these propensities are neutral in respect of the moral value of what the will may shape out of them; or rather in their prophetic aspect, they are 'double meaning prophesies.' They may be turned to good or to bad account; and to which they be turned depends solely upon the will. As organic fear is the basis both of cowardice and courage,

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[92] Ibid., p. 71

> so is hunger the basis of both gluttony and one form of temperance.

"The will becomes the only ultimate and real 'spring,' or creative source of moral conduct."[93] No theory of moral evil can trace the origin of Sin or Evil other than to the will of man to choose consciously that which he recognizes, or has the power to recognize, as moral imperfection.

The will, to Tennant, was that aspect of a human personality wherein the human was truly human. It is the place (or the time) when the person becomes the conscious mediator and controller of his "unconscious." "In its complete manifestation, it involves intention, activity or energizing, and, according to the view adopted here, freedom."[94] To Tennant it actually means something like the ability to choose behaviour - a knowing and responsible action on the part of a knowing and responsible person. It is Tennant's way of defending the dignity and individuality of mankind against the opinion that man is only a part of the natural process, and "nothing-but" an animal whose activity follows predicably from one need to the next; where good and evil are simply judgments made by an observer on the effects which a particular act has on the society involved - in a particular time, and in a particular

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[93] Ibid., p. 164

[94] Ibid., p. 161

place. And, quoting Dr. Gore in Lux Mndi: "It is characteristic . . . of the non-Christian view that it makes the body, the material, the seat of sin. It is essential to the Christian view to find its seat and only source in the Will."[95]

The will itself is free from the many biases which affect the natural man - or more exactly, as Tennant described it - the Will is by definition, that aspect of humanity which is free from and in control of, the natural man. "The only bias the Will can have is that which it makes for itself, or for the personality to which it belongs, by its own activity."[96]

With that we can agree. But there is a weakness in his use of the concept of the will. To preserve an extra-natural aspect of human behaviour, and in reliance on "The Will" to be that aspect, Tennant adopted the belief that the will, or some other which performs the same or similar functions, is an entirely independent "faculty" of man. "The will makes its own bias," he wrote. In Tennant, the will seems to have an existence other than in the life and body of the individual. Although he does write that the will is not a separate entity, and that it is but "one aspect of the spontaneous or inherent activity of the conscious subject,"[97] he also

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[95] Ibid., p. 205

[96] Ibid., p. 142

[97] Ibid., circa p. 142

writes about it as if it were separate and autonomous.

What Tennant seems to miss is the unconscious and non-rational origin of the will itself. As a child develops his individual "will, or conscience or super-ego," in actual fact he is having it "developed for him" by the various moral pressures of his immediate family and surrounding society. So the child to which Dr. Tennant was addressing his speculative thought, is one in which the "obedience required" and the "imitation of others," developed a moral ideal where the natural impulses were to be controlled and the brutishness of nature is subjected to and controlled by reason and the idea of fair play. In other settings, actual as well as hypothetical, the "will developed" could, and does, have quite different moral sensibilities. Or, in other words, if the will arises also within the process of nature and its growth is dependent upon the pressures it receives, it can hardly be thought independent and consequently be the judge and moral evaluator of the process itself.

John MacQuarrie has recently written of the problem involved in the use of "Will" and his comment can be applied to the meaning which Tennant intended: "It savours too much of the old faculty psychology, as if the will were some definite organ or department of the mind or personality."

Consequently, it is in little use today among

either psychologists and moralists.[98]

In the end Tennant becomes guilty of the same kind of criticism which he directed toward those who had refused to be realistic regarding the evolutionary origin of man. For those who had tried to separate those parts of man which they deemed holy, from those which were "physical" and which could safely be surrendered to nature. Tennant's will is something which man receives independently from his natural endowments; as if his mind (or will) were deposited directly into his person, and unrelated to, and non-communicating with, the rest of his development. The careful point he had made previously that the evolutionary development of man implies a natural origin of body and behaviour, is partly ignored when he comes to Will as the decision-making aspect of man, and the arbiter of moral choice.

> . . . the will has to withstand the clamorous solicitation of sense and impulse for satisfaction . . . and it has also to contend with already formed habits and to endeavor forcibly to break them.[99]

Although Tennant protests that it is not, his "Will" occasionally appears as a separate possession of an otherwise natural man.

We can adopt Tennant's individual responsibility.

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[98] John MacQuarrie, editor, Dictionary of Christian Ethics, article on "The Will", p. 359 .(London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1967

[99] Tennant, Concept of Sin, pp. 139-140

But we must also locate the ethical and moral capacity of man in the same biological and psychological conditioning which affects man himself and his other areas of choice. Even what one thinks is the ultimate unselfish supreme good does not arise outside of the developing individual, with his basic natural needs, his past training, and his present situation. The "Will" is also subject to these same pressures and limitations. The will is the man making his ethical choice, and the man is the sum total of all that affects his will, person and decisions.

4. The Individuality of Moral Judgment

Tennant was led to a new understanding of the origin of sin and the moral life. The scientific materials he used demanded that he make a new statement on the judgments which are made regarding moral behaviour: (1) much behaviour to which we attribute moral worth is out of the realm of the consideration of moral value at all, and (2) that since so much of "ethical" behaviour is out of the volitional area, it must be judged on a standard which varies from culture to culture, from time to time, from person to person, and from an individual now and to the same individual in the future.

The degree to which any individual can approximate the absolute ideal of moral goodness is not dependent "solely upon his volition and moral effort, but also upon conditions beyond his control, and which are different from those of any other individual."[100] Tennant noted that much of what we call good Christian behaviour, and that which is normally approved by the Christian moralists, often has more to do with innate disposition and with natural abilities, than with the

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[100] Tennant, Concept of Sin, p. 81

actual moral worth of the acts themselves or the individual's choice. He writes:

> . . . One necessary condition for virtue . . . is what we call a good disposition. I speak of an inherited predisposition, as distinct from volitionally acquired character. This inherited tendency to act in certain ways and to adopt emotional attitudes of certain kinds, is an important factor in moulding the quality of "character" in the broader or more comprehensive sense of that term.[101]

We cannot deny that people are born with different dispositions, and that those predispositions toward certain kinds of personality traits are important to the ethical conclusions a person will adopt. The disposition varies:

> In some it renders emotions warm and vivid; in others cold and dull. And inasmuch as it forms part of our psycho-physical constitution and is fixed at birth, it is obviously non-volitional; no responsibility for its quality attaches to its possessor. It can no more be said that a person ought to start with a good or beautiful disposition than that he ought to have a handsome face.[102]

We agree with Tennant at this point. He detailed some "essential elements" of what we call Christian goodness and acceptable behaviour in our western society, that are not within the power of the person to control, e.g., an active imagination is required for a full exercise of sympathy and considerate action, an impulsiveness is necessary to lend a "unique grace" to kindness and courtesy; and a ready tact is needed to discover the right word or the right action at any given moment.

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[101] Ibid., p. 59

[102] Ibid., p. 59

We might, indeed, add a sound physical constitution and good health; for physical infirmity is responsible for many mental states, such as melancholy or irritability.[103] And these are the states in which ethical choices and attitudes arise. Well-meaning people often act wrongly for they do not have the necessary abilities to prevent it. So concludes Tennant:

> The content of perfection for man is necessarily circumscribed by man's nature, by what he is and what he is capable of becoming. Human perfection, in the most general sense of the word, is inevitably something very different from the perfection of God.[104]

Our moral consciousness would be mocked if we had to be ashamed, and were accounted guilty for that over which we have no control and which we did not choose. "No Christian can believe that God requires us to pass the limit of our possibility."[105]

Sixty years ago Tennant was reminding the Christian community of the individuality of the judgment of sin. In alcholism, for example,

> . . . a man who inherits a physical or psychophysical constitution such as renders him subject to a lifelong and importunate temptation to indulge in his alcohol, but who, throughout many years of intense effort, steadfast loyalty to principle, and self-conquest, succeeds in maintaining the habit of abstinence, is from the standpoint of merit to be regarded as morally heroic; while from the standpoint of virtue or perfection he must be judged a miserably marred and stunted specimen of a man.[106]

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[103] Ibid., p. 62

[104] Ibid., p. 79

[105] Ibid., p. 119

[106] Ibid., p. 55

The only ethical perfection which is a possibility for man, and the only standard which should be used in judging his conduct is the "faultless use of such imperfect natural talents as he has." This is central in understanding Tennant and in understanding this aspect of our thesis.

> Unless a moral law or ideal applies to an individual as he is conditioned by his particular endowments, capacities, opportunities, and by the particular position in human society which he occupies, it cannot be relevant to him or binding upon him at all.[107]

In consequence, says Tennant, the moral law is largely accepted from a developing concept. Instead of a static eternal decree, instead of making the same demand on every stage of human life, it applies to the given stage of moral growth or possibility which a given individual can attain. The moral code, as apprehended by the subjects whom it concerns, differs of course in different societies, from age to age in the same society, and even in the same individual.[108] We must substitute an "indefinite number of graded ideals or standards, each one possessing absoluteness for a given individual at a given time.[109]

We referred earlier to a second relevant aspect of Professor N. H. G. Robinson's objection, and we will

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[107] Ibid., p. 85

[108] Ibid., p. 109

[109] Ibid., p. 91

turn to that now. This has to do with Robinson's criticism that the principal weakness in Tennant's view of sin is the "atomic" view of man sinfulness.

> . . . the evolutionary theory, as Dr. Tennant expounded it, appears guilty in some measure of what we have called atomism, that is to say, the tendency to regard a whole as reducible without remainder to a number of discrete units and therefore the tendency to treat these units as fundamental.[110]

Robinson elaborates that Tennant breaks up the divine law into many laws; he breaks up the life of man into many different stages, each standing by itself, and he breaks up the society of men into a mere accumulation of many units and many individuals.[111]

"Life," wrote Robinson, "is a continuous process, and it is both arbitrary and abstract to judge a single state in the light of its own standard."[112] While there is one side of the truth in acknowledging this contention that a man must be judged at the highest standard available for him at the moment, "It is the continuity which is fundamental and from which we must start; and the divisions, though useful for certain purposes, are relative, abstract, and arbitrary."[113]

Robinson writes that:

> In fact, Dr. Tennant's atomism appears at three different points, for (a) he breaks up the one divine law so that it becomes many laws and each is

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[110] Robinson, Faith and Duty, p. 123

[111] Ibid., p. 120

[112] Ibid., p. 121

[113] Ibid., pp. 121-22

> apposite to some individual at some stage of his moral career; (b) he breaks up the life of man into many different stages each standing by itself and requiring to be judged by his own appropriate ideal possibility; and (c) he breaks up the society of men so that it becomes little more than a mere accumulation of many units and many individuals.[114]

But, Robinson writes: "It is wrong in principle to start with a number of situations, and to try from there to build up a human life; the task is beyond us, for here as elsewhere we have murdered to dissect. It is the continuity which is fundamental and from which we must start . . ."

> If a man is to be judged, the subject of the judgment is his character, and character is a by-product of growth, not the sum of certain actions performed by him in a series of different situations.[115]

> Yet if Tennant's position were taken seriously, it would mean that in trying to assess a person's character one would first of all consider how he had acted in all the situations with which he was confronted in the light of the varying standards applicable to these different situations, each situation having its own standard . . . whereas in truth the verdict upon a man's character is not reached in any such artificial fashion but is arrived at intuitively.[116]

While it is based upon knowledge of what a man has done Robinson continues, it goes beyond a simple recitation of each act. "The reason is that acts are indications or expressions of character, not by any means its component parts."[117]

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[114] Ibid., p. 120

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid., p. 122

[117] Ibid., p. 122

It is here that our most serious disagreement occurs in treating Robinson's objection. If in atomizing sin Tennant allows for an individual and for the relative judgment upon the individual acts during the course of his life -- then we side with Tennant. The point we are making in this present thesis is that individuality of judgment is required in light of the total situation of the moral agent.

To the objection that Tennant atomizes the solidarity of human society, Robinson writes that Tennant denies the moral solidarity of the race. Tennant pleads innocent says Professor Robinson, "for he does speak of the solidarity of the race in respect of conative propensities . . ."

> Elsewhere he holds that the moral solidarity of the race is adequately acknowledged in his theory by the place it gives to the non-moral inheritance and to the influence of our evil social environment upon the growing individual.[118]

The former, Robinson says, provides not for solidarity but for atomism and the later "offers no more than an external relation between separate units whereby the one can produce an effect within the other . . ." but as sinners all men are "completely unanimous."[119]

> The final issue of this examination of Tennant's position must be that in the last analysis it is untenable for two reasons; namely, its empiricism in

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[118] Ibid., p. 123

[119] Ibid., p. 123

connection with the universality of sin and this other feature of atomism.[120]

Some further comment is required regarding the objection that Tennant has atomized sin. We can agree, of course, that the continuity of a whole life, with all of its moral acts, is fundamental; and that the long view of what it has meant or done, is the important consideration. But the first instance is compatible with Tennant's thought. He nowhere writes that we should ignore the totality of the moral life. He is concerned, as we are in this thesis writing - to use Robinson's words - with the "certain purposes" and how useful the divisions can be in approaching the understanding and judgment of human behaviour to which we attribute moral value.

There we are led to examine non-rational factors in ethical decisions. The individual's moral behaviour must be seen in terms of the facts which condition or determine what he should do and how he must do it - not for the purposes of evaluating his good or evil acts from the theological point of view; nor to determine his sinfulness and need of atonement with the righteous God - but to understand the act itself - in its individual meaning and its social setting. For while we may want to believe that an individual is ultimately responsible to God for the whole of his moral life - or even

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[120] Ibid.

that without receiving the grace of God he cannot perform any truly moral act - we must also investigate the incidental behaviour - out of which the whole is made, and apply only those standards which are applicable at that time.

Tennant suggests that if we approach morality in this way, we will discover that no all encompassing attitude or standard of judgment can be used. No metaphysical injunction, no declaration of the "ought" - can be made until we first understand the individual involved and the act itself in terms of the possibilities open at the particular moment for the particular individual involved.

Tennant is not trying to eliminate responsibility or to excuse an individual for his immoral behaviour. His argument

> insists . . . upon the responsibility of the sinner for his sin . . . It refuses to shift one whit of the responsibility for real sin to the subject's environment, the conditions of his life, or his natural endowments.[121]

Sin, or moral imperfection, has to do with volition and with volition alone. It is "the fact of deliberate choosing of the worse when a better course is both known and possible." If "sin" is to be a moral-ethical term at all, it "must connote only transgression of moral law by a moral agent."[122] Tennant borrows

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[121] Tennant, Concept of Sin, p. 246

[122] Ibid., p. 98

Sidgwick's "strict sense of ethics" - it refers only to "what is right or what ought to be, so far as this depends on the voluntary action of individuals."[123] The act, to be ethical at all, must be capable of being understood by the individual. Sin must always possess four characteristics: it must be a violation of moral law; this law must be known or be capable of being known, as binding; there must be two lines of conduct open to the actor; and the activity must be the outcome of the intention.[124] "These conditions may be summed up in one word - accountability." Rather than set aside individual responsibility, Tennant is attempting to establish it. Rather than deny the corporate setting of human responsibility, he is attempting to enlarge it.

Robinson objects that Tennant has introduced a "somewhat elastic and indefinite element"[125] in introducing the idea that man's ethical behaviour must be judged in its individual setting. While "there is much to be said in favour of this theory . . . yet it may be doubted whether as it stands it provides an ultimately satisfactory account of the matter."[126]

The strength of Tennant's argument is clear and,

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[123] Ibid., p. 64

[124] Ibid., p. 209

[125] Robinson, Faith and Duty, p. 119

[126] Ibid., p. 119

we conclude, justified. Man is a unity, but within the corporate unity there are individual considerations which must be judged according to the exigencies of the particular amoral situation.

> A man's desires are determined . . . by the totality of his point of view . . . Each desire is said to belong to a certain universe or mental context, and loses its significance for its subject when he passes into another mood or frame of mind. Generally speaking a man holds several points of view together.[127]

A child cannot be held accountable for the moral act which in a responsible adult would be judged as ethically evil. All the multitude of individual circumstances which are present in each "ethical" situation for the adult as well are part of what Tennant is stressing throughout his argument.

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[127] Tennant, Concept of Sin, p. 119

5. Conclusion

With that last criticism, our inquiry into the thought of F. R. Tennant has reached its objectives. So much more could be added regarding Tennant himself and the related topics of this chapter, but that would lie beyond the scope of our thesis interest here. We are concerned with the question of the relevance of Dr. Tennant to the inter-relationship of physical science and Christian ethics, and the result of that interaction. In conclusion, but with the qualifications herein registered, Dr. Tennant is useful to this thesis and to the contemporary study of ethics, for the following reasons:

a. In the first place Tennant initiates the approach to ethical and moral questions in the common meeting-ground of scientific study and Christian ethical thought. Our objective here is in the rather specific interest of the evolutionary origin of man and the social growth of his ethical-moral world. Neither the presuppositions of Christian theology, nor the presuppositions of scientific ethics stand independently from the other, although each maintains an essential integrity in its own field. Each is a legitimate academic

and ethical enterprise, and in separate ways, each is subordinate to the other. No theological ethics can be valid without the empirical data of evolutionary study, and no scientific ethic can violate the basic non-scientific questions. Both contribute significantly to a constructive ethic: the "is" and the "ought" arise together. Tennant is a Christian Modernist, in the definition which was set forth by A. M. Ramsey, one who makes:

> The self-conscious effort to protect the rights of free inquiry, to use the findings of the modern sciences and to insist that there is development in the understanding of the Christian faith.[128]

In 1905, Tennant described the age, as a scientific one that was "characterized by the zealous pursuits of physical science . . . and by an increasingly rich and impressive harvest of results acquired by means of scientific investigation."[129] Tennant took both the modern world and his Christian faith seriously. We can ask the same of contemporary Christian moralists.

We concur here with a recent evaluation of Tennant by C. R. Renowden:

> . . . it is Tennant's approach to the subject, as governed by certain definite principles, which has a decisive relevance today. He reminds us that an adequate doctrine of sin requires expression in clear and precise language and, at the same time, it must take full account of modern knowledge and

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[128] Ramsey, Era of Anglican Theology, p. 74

[129] Tennant, Concept of Sin, p. 188

> the demands of the enlightened moral consciousness. Above all, it must not do violence to man's true stature as a moral personality.[130]

b. In his evolutionary viewpoint, Tennant has freed the natural appetites and impulses from any kind of moral judgment, thereby neutralizing the moral aspect of man's basic nature. Tennant argued that the natural "instincts and impulses and tendencies" of man are not evil. Man's basic humanity with its natural origin becomes then the source of a wholesome ethical life and existence. The question of what Tennant does to the Doctrine of Sin, or to the Fall and Original Sin, is not really our question in this thesis. Rather, we are concerned to show that man, as he rises in the process, receives a moral awareness, and becomes concerned to modify his "natural" behaviour in the light of accepted moral principles.

In that regard, we adopt the conclusion of Dr. N. P. Williams who writes:

> Dr. Tennant has laid theology at large under an immense obligation by the courage with which, following in the steps of Julian and Scotus, he has proclaimed the moral neutrality of the appetites (the fomes peccati) as such, thereby sweeping away at one blow the endless confusions which clustered round the word "concupiscence," and by insisting that the word "Sin" means, not a psychological state nor yet a forensic status, but an act committed with full and conscious deliberation in defiance of a known law.[131]

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[130] Renowden, Church Quarterly Review, vol. 163

[131] McDowall, Evolution and the Need of Atonement, p. v.

c. Tennant is helpful in understanding the relativity, or better the individuality, of Christian moral judgments. The two ways in which he directs our thoughts here are (1) that the natural endowment of the individual moral agent must be considered before a judgment is made on his act; and(2) that we guard against associating good Christian moral behaviour with the kind of gentle and agreeable disposition where men are judged good in proportion to the way in which they perform on our scale of agreed and established value.

In all of this Tennant provides an acceptable working attitude to ethical questions and provides a theoretical framework in which an open discussion of contemporary moral problems can take place. And, although he is principally concerned with ethics, moral problems and solutions can follow directly from his philosophical and scientific approach.

In all, we close with the words of another critic of Tennant's work and borrow their meaning for our own. E. J. Bicknell wrote:

> May I take this opportunity of expressing my own great obligation to Dr. Tennant's books, though at times I am unable to accept his position. All Christian teachers owe him a debt of gratitude for his pioneer work and his reverent and fearless attempt to restate old truths in the light of modern knowledge.[132]

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[132] Ibid., p. v

DR. KARL BARTH

B. Dr. Karl Barth

1. Introduction

From Tennant's philosophical introduction we turn to Dr. Karl Barth. At the start we have a problem. In Communism and the Theologians, Charles West began his study on the significance of Karl Barth with the words: "The right of Karl Barth to take his place in this study at all must first be established."[133] To those who hold the prejudicial notion that Dr. Barth has never been interested in man and the social, political and ethical problems of the times, a notion that is exposed by Robert McAffee Brown in his introduction to The Portrait of Karl Barth,[134] some

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[133] Charles West, Communism and the Theologians (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958) In actual fact Dr. West judges Barth to have a far greater place in the continuing dialogue with Communism than all of the liberals combined, and of equal influence with a man like social-ethicist Reinhold Niebuhr. West's argument rests more clearly in the work of Barth than the social philosophers, or the syncretistic approach of Paul Tillich; mainly because Barth "has liberated European Protestant theology both from bondage to one political ideology . . . and from the sterile division of life into the two kingdoms of grace and law." -- "He has done more than any other theologian in the tradition of the reformation to open the way for a Christian dynamic in political life which has made a Christian encounter with Communism possible at all." -- It was Barth "who provided . . . the elements of Christological understanding of the state, a free direct approach to human beings and their welfare, and knowledge of the crisis of Christian obedience in the political sphere." p. 304 and passim.

[134] Georges Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1963; Portrait de Karl Barth, Labor et Fides, Geneva, 1960), translated with an introduction by Robert McAffee Brown.

question could be raised regarding our use of Karl Barth in this thesis on science and Christian ethics.

As Professor Will Herberg noted a dozen years ago, it is true that:

> the image of Barth that is still operative in important circles in the English speaking world is the image of an earlier Barth, a position which Barth himself abandoned more than two decades ago.[135]

That image holds Barth to be a good bell-ringer in the early years of this century, a kind of pendulum-to-the-right, who reacted against liberalism with a neo-orthodox call to a God who is totaliter alter, with little or no direct reference or responsibility to man. But, West said, Barth belonged to his study because it was Barth more than any other who opened up the Christian imagination "to the boundless resources for practical living in the fact that the Christian's life is in the hands of a redeeming God."[136] And, we should not forget that during the nineteen thirties and forties, "while he was turning out huge volumes of the dogmatics with his right hand," he was also "dashing off political tracts with his left - and in every case the left hand knew what the right was doing."[137] In that combination, says Herberg,

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[135] Will Herberg in his introduction to Community, State and Church, collected works of Karl Barth (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1960), pp. 13-14

[136] West, Communism and Theologians, p. 15

[137] Brown, Portrait of Barth, p. 22

> A Barthian social philosophy has emerged, and this theologian, who abjures apologetics and desires nothing but to expound the Word of God, has been compelled by circumstances to propound views on society and the state that make him into one of the most influential social thinkers of our time.[138]

Yet, even if we grant the social relevance of Barth, there could still be a question of why Barth belongs in a thesis which takes its starting point in the evolutionary origin of man, and searches out the biological contributions to contemporary Christian ethics. In answer we offer this three-pronged raison d'etre for including Barth:

(1) Largely due to the theological stature which Barth has attained during this century, there are many points where he is directly relevant to our topic. It will become clear that we do not adopt the Barthian position regarding man or his ethics, but Barth is not an "isolationist." His Christo-centered understanding of man, and his ethics as solely the command of God, do not lend themselves to a compatible co-existence with other anthropological or ethical stances. Nonetheless, Barth does help to preserve a constant interplay with the forces around him, cultural, political, and scientific. He insists first on the claim of the Christian to make his moral judgments and develop his anthropology from within the scope of his distinctively Christian faith. But, while Barth always proceeds from the center of the Christian witness, he goes out to challenge the particular issue at hand. In an ultimate way, "the path

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[138] Herberg, in introduction to Community, State and Church, p. 13

from human knowledge to the knowledge of God is a cul de sac:"

> But this does not make conversation and understanding and mutual enrichment impossible between theology and culture; it simply means that conversation and understanding and mutual enrichment do not proceed solely on the premises of those who reject Christian revelation out of hand.[139]

To that point we will return shortly. But the first reason why Dr. Barth belongs to this writing is in the scope and depth of his ethical writings.

(2) There is a second reason, and that is a sense in which Barth brings himself to this study. However lofty is his original ethical position, Barth comes down from his theological tower to address himself to most of the problems that are concomitant with a study of biology and ethics. In "Special Ethics" Barth found the time, and had the interest, in writing out long and relevant commentaries on a multitude of special topics. Gustafson explains further:

> Barth is the only theologian of his generation who took interest in a number of special ethical problems that have occupied the attention of Roman Catholic moral theology. Examples of such are his discussions of abortion, suicide, tyrannicide, and is (sic) intensive discussion of war.[140]

Dr. Barth read widely in scientific literature and he incorporated it into his discussions. Others have taken up the interest since, notably men like Paul Ramsey and Joseph Fletcher, and are addressing themselves to most of the topics mentioned. But Barth was there throughout the early middle

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[139] Brown, in introduction to Portrait of Barth, pp. 8-9

[140] James M. Gustafson, Christ and the Moral Life (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 19

years of the twentieth century, applying his ethic found in heaven, to the affairs of men on earth. Barth never finished his ethical writings, as he never finished the Dogmatics itself, but:

> In spite of the incompleteness of Barth's ethics, as he planned to write them, the student is confronted with the most inclusive and systematic theological ethics to be developed in recent theology. Indeed it comes close to being one of the most impressive theological ethics in Christian thought.[141]

Barth and his ethics do not exist in a vacuum. Our study of Barth begins in the assumption that when a theologian chooses to enter into the ethical and moral areas where knowledge of biological information is essential, he chooses to be judged by the criteria of this study.

(3) Finally, we take up the ethical writings of Dr. Barth for a third reason, one which might almost be taken as a tongue-in-cheek attitude, albeit quite serious in its intent. It is the reason which Barth himself used, also not without some lightheartedness when he accepted the invitation of the University of Aberdeen in 1937 to give the Gifford Lectures. There he was, fulfilling the request of Lord Gifford that Natural Theology be defended and, as Barth confessed, he had always been "an avowed opponent of all natural theology." He said there that he would throw natural theology "into relief by the dark background of a totally different theology."

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[141] Gustafson, Christ and Moral Life, p. 15

The particular background he chose was "the Knowledge of God and the Service of God according to the teaching of the Reformation." But said Barth, he would not be ungracious enough towards Lord Gifford's will that he would attack natural theology. He would only present his own case, as a backdrop against which to view it. Then he said:

> However that may be, it can only be to the good of "Natural Theology" to be able once again to measure itself as the truth - if it is the truth! - by that which from its point of view is the greatest of errors. Opportunity is to be given to do this here. And in this sense I propose to satisfy Lord Gifford's requirements.[142]

Natural theology could fend for itself.

What we are borrowing is the idea that a few of the salient objectives of this study can be thrown into clearer focus as seen against the theology of Karl Barth. There is a kind of healthy negative contrast at some important points. Meynell once noted that all theologians who wish to engage in any kind of natural theology, will inevitably come into conflict with Barth. And, if they are to accomplish anything in that pursuit, they must offer "reasons for denying either Barth's premises, or the validity of his arguments, or both."[143]

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[142] Karl Barth, The Knowledge of God and the Service of God According to the Teaching of the Reformation (Gifford Lectures 1937 and 1938. Translated by Haire and Henderson (London: Hodder and Stoughton, second impression, 1949), p.7

[143] Hugo A. Meynell, Grace Versus Nature (Studies in Karl Barth's Dogmatics), (London: Sheed & Ward, 1965), p. 2

2. Two Problems Related to Ethics

a. Ethics and the Doctrine of God

In the Foreword to the first volume of the Church Dogmatics written in 1932, Karl Barth described the place which ethics would have throughout his writings.

> Ethics so-called I regard as the doctrine of God's command and do not consider it right to treat it otherwise than as an integral part of dogmatics, or to produce a dogmatics which does not include it.[144]

There Barth announced his intention to include a discussion of ethics at the close of each of the major volumes of the Dogmatics. "The Command of God in General" would be discussed at the close of the Doctrine of God.[145] "The Commandment of God from the Viewpoint of Order" would come at the close of the Doctrine of Creation.[146] The "Viewpoint from Law" would come at the close of the Doctrine of Reconciliation; and from the "Viewpoint of Promise" at the close of the Doctrine of Redemption. Only the first two were completed as Dr. Barth died in 1968 before the other volumes were written. Yet, abbreviated though it was, Barth's ethic is clear and consistent and, from the viewpoint of meaning, is also complete.

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[144] Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. 1, part 1, p. xiv

[145] Ibid., vol. 2, part 2, chapter 8

[146] Ibid., vol. 3, part 4

Ethics is, for Barth, an exclusively theological task. In the four major sub-divisions of the chapter, "The Command of God," ethics exists as a "Task of the Doctrine of God"; comes as "A Claim of God"; is seen best as a "Decision of God"; and finally comes as the "Judgment of God." "The God who claims man makes Himself originally responsible for man."[147] To speak fully about man, we speak also of the God who made him and made the command for his life. The "special way" of this theological ethic, is in "the Word and work of God in Jesus Christ, in which the right action of man has already been performed and therefore waits only to be confirmed by our action."[148]

Noting the "superior principle" of theological ethics, Barth wrote:

> Its starting point is that all ethical truth is enclosed in the command of the grace of God - no matter whether this is understood as rational or historical, secular or religious, ecclesiastical or universal, ethico-social truth.[149]

Barth writes that:

> We must refuse to follow all these attempts at theological ethics which start from the assumption that it is to be built on, or to proceed from, a general human ethics . . . In the relationship between the command of God and the ethical problem, as we have defined it in its main features, there is not a universal moral element autonomously confronting the Christian. It is, therefore, quite out of the question methodically to subordinate the latter to the former, to build on it, or to derive from it.[150]

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[147] Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. 2, part 2, p. 543

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid., p. 527

[150] Ibid., p. 543

The subject matter of ethics is not concerned with the best way to make a good ethical decision, based on all the available information. It is not even "the Word of God as it is claimed by man." It is "the Word of God as it claims man. It is not man as he is going to make something of the Word of God, but the Word of God as it is going to make something of man."[151]

> The propositions of Christian ethics are propositions of Christian dogmatics. This means that as with all the other propositions of dogmatics the truth in them is contained and lies in the Word of God, that it can be known only in the Word of God, and must again and again be sought and caught in the Word of God and therefore in faith.[152]

Christian ethics, says Barth, is the process where man attempts to repeat what has been said to him in the divine command of God. The command represents the sovereign claim which God has made on him in Christ. Man can do nothing to change it; he can only learn to obey it. The Word of God is already there, it is for him to learn to listen. What is "good" for the man to do, is already made good by the Word of God. As Barth explained in his article on "Christian Ethics" in the volume God Here and Now:

> What is good in the Christian sense of the word? Good, in the Christian sense, is that conduct and action of man's which corresponds to the conduct and action of God in history. . . . To say it briefly: That action of man's is good in which man is thankful for God's grace . . . That human conduct and act of man's

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[151] Ibid., p. 546

[152] Ibid., p. 603

> is good, therefore, which corresponds to the grace of God.[153]

An act is "good" only as it corresponds to the grace of God. Evil, to Barth, is that conduct or act which "contradicts the content and action of God's history, in which he hurries or sneaks past the suffering and the joy of Jesus Christ."[154] There is no other way to say it. With Barth there is no overlap between this ethic and all other ethics. It stands alone, as alone as Barth himself was when he wrote the Commentary on Romans in 1919.

Barth confesses that he would have preferred to "keep to the beaten tracks when considering the basis of ethics. But I could not and cannot do so."[155] And why? Because to Barth, the ethical question does not arise in a vacuum. We are not free to begin our deliberations of the subject as if the command had not been spoken. Neither can we begin our discussion of good and evil as if the Grace of God did not exist in Jesus Christ. Outside of theology there is no ethics.

Barthian supporters often advise that the extremism of Dr. Barth can be seen best in his historical setting. Douglas Horton wrote:

> Only those of us who are old enough to remember the particular kind of desiccated humanism, almost empty of

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[153] Karl Barth, God Here and Now, translated by Paul M. VanBuren (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 89

[154] Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. 2, part 2, p. x

[155] A repeated emphasis in Barth.

> otherworldly content, which prevailed in many Protestant areas in the early decades of this century, can understand the surprise, the joy, the refreshment which would have been brought by the book (The Word of God and the Word of Man) to the ordinary and, like myself, somewhat desultory reader of the religious literature of that time.[156]

Barth was of course, swinging the pendulum back from the humanistic theology of Schleiermacher's "feeling"; and Ritschl's "moral value judgments"; and Troeltsch's "scientific religious history." Historical insights are most helpful, but there remains a basic epistemological objection that in its historical setting or not, Barth excludes what Tillich calls "The Situation"[157] from his theological formulations, and thereby suffers the consequence of an isolated ethical task. As James Gustafson noted, Barth misses the fact that as "the analyses and choices are human, made by creatures with various biases and perspectives

> It is neither Christ nor love alone that tells the conscientious youth what his vocation ought to be; it is also his aptitudes, his opportunities, his desire to achieve, his awareness of various purposes . . . Christ does not prescribe the options and dictate the choice of the Christian.[158]

With Barth the ethical question is recaptured for the Christian theologian. He insists that man belongs to God and that man's ethical life is not unlike his other activities. Man belongs to God; but also, in one important

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[156] Quoted by Arnold B. Come in An Introduction to Barth's Dogmatics for Preachers (London: SCM, 1963), p. 43

[157] Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, (University of Chicago Press, 1951), vol. 1, p. 5

[158] Gustafson, Christ and Moral Life, p. 268, passim

sense, God belongs to man. God cannot be considered apart from his overflowing love and His Will to create an existence independent from himself - in Man. Ethics is an integral part of the Doctrine of God. But it must also be part of the Doctrine of Man. That, Dr. Barth cannot ultimately concede. Therein lies the weakness, to which we will return.

b. Theological Ethics in Relationship

We will discuss later what Barth has to say about non-theological sources of the study of man. Generally we conclude that he uses those sources more competently than his critics suggest. Here, in the Barthian Ethic itself, it is essential that we understand the manner in which he uses those studies.

In the Barthian ethic, as we have noted, theology is invariably in a superior relationship to all other ethics. But the relationship with Barth can never be apologetic. The theological ethic will annex the others for "annexation remains annexation, however legal it may be, and there must be no armistice with the peoples of Canaan and their culture and their Cultus."[159] It is no coincidence that Barth chose "the annexation of the peoples of Canaan" - an annexation which was noted for its lack of co-operation. They annihilated the land:

> Grace which has from the start to share its power with a force of nature is no longer grace, i.e., it cannot be recognized as what the grace of God is in the consideration and conception of that divine act, as what it is in Jesus Christ. And therefore revelation which has from the very outset a partner in the reason of the creature, and which cannot be revelation without its cooperation, is no longer revelation.[160]

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[159] Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. 2, part 2, p. 524

[160] Ibid., p. 531

It is that obstinate attitude which prompts many commentators to conclude that; as Hartwell writes: "There is no room for man's independent enquiry into the question of good and evil. Otherwise man would usurp God's place as the sole Judge of good and evil."[161] And Meynell, in Grace Versus Nature, goes further: "Here the thesis of Barth, that all human aspirations are equally worthless when exposed to the grace of God revealed in Scripture, appears at its most implausible." Then follows immediately:

> The paragraph in which Barth says that a man who acknowledges other lords than God is a murderer even if he never hurts a flea, an adulterer even if he never looks at a woman, is surely one of the worst in the whole Dogmatics.[162]

Meynell extends his criticism too far. For one thing he uses a quotation from the Dogmatics which does not refer to the particular argument he is attempting to make. And for another, Barth never says that "human aspirations are worthless." In the text which Meynell selected Barth is elaborating the theme of what the command has to say to man as the covenant-partner of God. It is worth pursuing, not to be picayune but to stress Barth's actual point.

The command requires, Barth writes,[163] that man "should be wholly and genuinely free in relation to his neighbour: free by his absolute obligation to God; freed

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[161] Herbert Hartwell, The Theology of Karl Barth: An Introduction (Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd., London, 1964), p. 56

[162] Meynell, Grace Versus Nature, p. 56

[163] Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 619-20

from all other divine or quasi-divine masters." Then he will be able to keep the commandments. And,

> He does what belongs to their fulfillment, but how can he fulfill them when he neglects what they really require of him, when he is captive and bound by a regard for other lords and powers besides God?

Then follows Meynell's quotation:

> The man who is a captive in this way is a murderer even if he does not harm a fly, an adulterer even if he never looks on a woman, a thief even if he never appropriates a straw that does not belong to him.[164]

And finally, Barth goes on to write of what happens to this covenant-partner of God's when he continues to be under the "grip of mammon."

Barth is referring to the command and the act which it requires. He is not in that paragraph talking about the way in which we gather our ethical information, or the worth of our human aspirations. He is referring to the command for action towards one's neighbour. It is not unlike the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:27: "Everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." We really cannot serve God and Mammon! It is the failure to be freed from quasi-masters so that he might do justice to his neighbour. It is in following some other master than God, which makes that man a "captive, and a murderer who does not commit murder."

But beyond the specific use of this quotation, Meynell has overemphasized the position which Barth actually takes

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[164] Ibid., pp. 619-20

regarding outside sources of information. "Theological ethics," Barth writes, "can and must establish a continuous relationship of its thinking and speaking with the human ethical problem as a whole."[165]

> It will be absolutely open to all that it can learn from general human ethical enquiry and reply. It can be absolutely open because it has absolutely nothing to fear from this quarter.[166]

"Ethics" is separate from the "ethos." The former is where ethical valuations are made; the latter is the situation in which we act. Barth draws a clear distinction in his definition: "Ethics is the science or knowledge or doctrine of the modes of human behaviour, of the constants or laws of human behaviour."[167] But there are many other questions about the modes of human action (in the ethos). Psychological, historico-morphological, politico-juridicial, and philosophico-historical questions are always involved. These, however, "do not have anything to do with the ethical question itself." The ethical question:

> asks concerning the genuineness and rightness and value of the constants which are at issue in those other questions. . . . It asks concerning the validity of the laws of human behaviour ascertained on the basis of these other questions. It asks concerning the law of the good, and the connexion between this law and those other laws and the human behaviour which is in conformity with them.[168]

"Ethics" says Barth, "raises the fundamental question."

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[165] Ibid., p. 524

[166] Ibid.

[167] Ibid., pp. 513-14. I am indebted to Professor N. H. G. Robinson for calling my attention to this quotation as well as elucidating its meaning.

[168] Ibid., p. 515

There is admittedly some ambiguity at this point. We cannot accept Barth entirely. The separation between "ethics" and "morals" we have already defined as mainly a working definition of separate functions. But Barth's separation is radical. It is based on an assumption that the "modes of human action" are separate from the knowledge or the doctrines which support them.

In fact they are not. As it is true that we do not know the ought without the is, so also we do not know the ethical without the moral. The command can make its claim, but until we determine the man and his "situation" - in Tillich's use of the word - we will not be able to make claims for the ethic. The "ethic" in this case has specific moral implications.

But to go back to our main argument. Professor H. D. Lewis made a similar criticism[169] of Barth some years ago, as indeed many others have done, including Professor N. H. G. Robinson in Faith and Duty.[170] Lewis argued that Barth had excluded the moral philosopher from the ethical enterprise. Barth said that "God is known only by the Scriptures . . . and the Divine message must be known immediately and has no echo in ordinary thought and experience."[171] Barth's

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[169] We should not imply however that Lewis would be sympathetic to the over-all concern of this thesis. But we borrow the kind of point he made and substitute the interest of the scientific moralist for the moral philosopher - and that would not be a compatible thought with Lewis' philosophy.

[170] Robinson, Faith and Duty, esp. pp. ix, 5, 12, 21, etc.

[171] H. D. Lewis, Morals and Revelation (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1951), p. 5

inflexibility eliminates all cooperative investigations of ethics, and to Lewis, that meant it failed its responsibility. "A successful issue to the crises of Western civilization," wrote Lewis, "in its strictly ethical and political aspects, turns very largely on our ability to agree to differ in a spirit of mutual respect."[172] Lewis notes that:

> A spirit of Christian trust and forebearance is hardly likely to be engendered when men turn away from rational consideration of one another's problems; and wrap themselves up in a cloak of spiritual self-assurance.[173]

Lewis also notes that the Word of God comes to the individual in the crises of historical circumstances. Surely though, "It presupposes some appraisement of historical events . . . and depends on a fair appreciation of the facts in a particular situation." Any ethics which maintains that it does not, "condemns itself at the start."[174]

"The worst of it all is yet to mention," writes Lewis. That is Barth's rejection of the natural capacities in man. Barth claims they are not only unreliable, but positively evil.[175] Natural human capacities must be examined as they in turn give us the ability to examine further.

Lewis is correct by and large in his criticism. We

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[172] Ibid., p. 7

[173] Ibid., p. 8

[174] Ibid., p. 8

[175] Ibid., p. 20

stress one further point: not only man's "reason" and ethical tools, but also the natural investigations into the nature of man and his behaviour; must be included in ethical discussions.

Barth is not of course unaware of this kind of concern. "I, too, have heard the news," he writes, "that we can speak about God only by speaking about man."

> I do not contest this claim. Rightly interpreted, it may be an expression of the true insight that God is not without man. . . . But this claim, correctly understood, calls for a counterclaim. We can speak about man only by speaking about God.[176]

The counterclaim comes first to Barth. And therein will remain a difference. In either case, Barth does leave room for some kind of subordinate interrelationship between the theological ethic and the ethics around it, even if it is a kind of Canaanite annexation.

The "latter Barth" has altered some of his views and has given a new breadth to the possibilities in the world around the Barthians.[177] Perhaps it is more that

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[176] Karl Barth, The Humanity of God (London: Collins, 1961), p. 69

[177] Will Herberg once described four different Barths, which surely must have amused Karl. There was the "pre-Barthian Barth," i.e., the Barth of the liberal period which everyone forgets, but prior to the publication and preparation of Romans, that Barth was. Karl Barth was once a liberal! Then there is the "proto-Barthian Barth," that is, the Barth of the First Edition of Romans, Barth the bell-ringer, who awakened himself and the world. Third is the "early-Barthian Barth" of the Second Edition of Romans and throughout the twenties. And finally, there is the "late-Barthian Barth," the Barth of the Church Dogmatics and after Barth's cf. Community, State and Church, Introduction by Herberg, pp. 15-16. The "late-Barthian Barth" is really the Barth we know and the one we have met in this thesis. The

there is some hidden ambiguity in the point itself, or at least some basic ambidexterity in Barth.

In that regard, there is one other comment we must make; onewhich was also caught precisely by Edward Leroy Long in his Survey of Christian Ethics:

> Barth postulates a sharp dichotomy between theological discourse and general discourse about ethics and then seems to make a tentative place for general discourse for which there is really no theoretical slot in his scheme of things.[178]

He does find that "tentative place." It is the definition of the "place" which concerns us here. How is the Christian ethic related to the world of human morals? How can Barth use information which is theoretically unavailable?

In a more recent article Barth wrote on "Christian Ethics,"[179] there is a prolegomena to an answer.

"What is the posture between Christian ethics and the world of morals?" he asked.

> The answer is this: Christian ethics runs through this whole world of morals, tests everything and preserves the best, only the best, and that means those

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real question might be does the real Barth change. He probably did abandon "the lion's roar," as he once called it himself; and he probably did come more to emphasize the Grace as opposed to the judgment of God, and he probably did move more towards the "humanity" of both God and man. But in ethics, in our concern with it anyway, the leopard never really did change his spots,(or was it a lion and his roar?). Throughout the Dogmatics, and in later publications, Barth changed not one whit. The strength and the weakness were there from the start of Volume 1 in 1932.

[178] Edward L. Long, A Survey of Christian Ethics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 31

[179] Barth, God Here and Now, chapter 6, "Christian Ethics," pp. 86 ff.

> things by which from time to time God's grace is best praised.[180]

Whatever his theoretical reluctance to "wallow around" in inferior human ethics, there is no reluctance whatever to invade these areas. Barth uses the best which the other ethics can offer, but never is led by them.

> The assertions of human understanding need not on that account be false. The old as well as the modern natural sciences, or rather natural philosophy, teach that man is a very special and strange element in the cosmic-terrestrial, in the physico-chemical, in the organic-biotic processes of universal existence.
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> . . . All of this may be true according to the Christian view but only if included in it is the fact to which it is subordinated and in connection with which it is understood, that man is from God and belongs wholly to God, that as His creature, man is hastening towards Him and towards eternal life with Him.[181]

The extreme of that position is untenable in this thesis. Yet, Barth did not always practice what he preached. He did make and use that "place" to great advantage, and that tentative place which had no place in his over-all theory. And, we must remember that it comes as part of his defense of the supremacy of the claim of God and His command. It is that claim which is ultimate, not the actual decision making process to which we normally refer in ethical choices. The Christian ethic can go out and look around and select whatever it chooses, which can then be annexed into its own arena.

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[180] Ibid., p. 90

[181] Karl Barth, Against the Stream (London: SCM, 1954), p. 187

No real dialogue is really possible, even in the "latest Barth." One of his last books relates the results of a conference[182] he attended in Geneva on Humanism. He was as out of place there philosophically, as he was at the Gifford Lectures in Aberdeen.[183] He told the assembled crowd of humanists that there was only one humanism, the humanism of God, which was the basis in Christ for all other humanism. "If I was preaching," Barth said, "I would tell you all to repent and we would pray the Lord's Prayer and celebrate the Lord's Supper together." Little wonder, as Barth later related,[184] "All they would say to us again and again was that the 'claim of absoluteness' of the 'religion of revelation' was a horrible, dangerous, and unbearable thing." Then, writes Barth,

> that which is called the 'exclusiveness' of the Christian proclamation and Christian theology, when looked at in its own terms, consists in this - . . . that it summons men to decision and responsibility, to faith and obedience. From case to case, but also fundamentally and permanently, it calls men to a binding decision and responsibility, to a freedom which is the highest and truest freedom, since it is that of the free man who knows himself in all serenity to be a man who is called, ordered, and obligated.[185]

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[182] "The Christian Proclamation Here and Now", an address delivered before the Recontres Internationales in 1949, included in God Here and Now, pp. 1 ff.

[183] Cf. page 279

[184] Barth, God Here and Now, p. 106

[185] Ibid., p. 107

3. Two Problems Related to Man

a. "The Anthropological Problem"

In Barth's special ethics we will discuss the moral problems which are related to our thesis; but it will be helpful first to examine the approach which Dr. Barth takes to the nature of the "ethical man." In Part 2 of Volume III of the Church Dogmatics - "The Doctrine of Creation," Barth devoted a lengthy volume exclusively to man, "The Creature." The editors noted that:

> Publication of this part-volume in English should finally destroy the charge that Karl Barth has nothing to say about man. Here under the title "The Creature," he has in fact given us the most massive account of the doctrine of man in our time.[186]

"Doctrine of Man" applies only in the more formal sense of the words, for Barth's anthropology in the end is not an anthropology at all. It is a Christo-centered theology of the man who exists in Christ and is understood only in that reclamation which took place in the life and death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. There is no other man, and no "man," independent from that One. Barth is addressing himself not to the usual question of the nature of man. He is concerned with "Man as the Creature of God, as his dear child and covenant partner, wholly bound by his grace

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[186] Church Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 2, p. vii

and upheld by His Faithfulness."

> We remember that we shall search the Old and New Testaments in vain for a true anthropology and therefore for a theory of the relation of soul and body. The Biblical texts regard and describe man in the full exercise of his intercourse with God. Their authors have neither the time nor the interest to occupy themselves with man as such, nor to give themselves or their readers a theoretical account of what is to be understood by the being of man.[187]

What was good enough for the authors of the original word, should be good enough for Karl Barth!

Next, Barth refuses to allow man to be placed within any Weltanschauung which would unite him with the cosmos and extend his individuality into a continuity of life beyond man. There can be no category or frame of reference into which he "fits," or where he can be understood and explained. No kind of scientific anthropology can move in alongside this one which Barth proposes.

> Irrespective of details, the attitude to this book will necessarily be determined by whether the reader finally agrees with me that the way of a theological doctrine of man proposed here is not only possible, but the only one possible . . .[188]

The Word of God might be said to have a "cosmic character," but only

> to the extent that its message of salvation relates to the man who is rooted in the cosmos, who is lost and ruined with the cosmos, and who is found and renewed by his Creator at the heart of the cosmos.[189]

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[187] Ibid., p. 433

[188] Ibid., p. ix

[189] Ibid., p. 4

Man is not poised in some cosmological void, into which men have to peek with their home-made tools of research and sundry world-views to see what he looks like or to find out who he really is.

> What we recognize to be human nature is nothing other than the disgrace which covers his (man's) nature; his inhumanity, perversion and corruption. If we try to deny this or to tone it down, we have not yet understood the full import of the truth that for the reconciliation of man with God, nothing more nor less was needed than the death of the Son of God, and for the manifestation of this reconciliation nothing more nor less than the resurrection of the Son of Man, Jesus Christ.[190]

To the initial question "Who and what is man within the cosmos?", Barth replies:

> If our decisive insights are right, the first and basic answer can only be that among all the creatures, man, i.e., this man, is the one in whose identity with himself we must recognize at once the identity of God with Himself.[191]

Our very selves, and our rebellion from God, is not something which we know as a result of our own insight. We know it solely from the Word of God:

> In virtue of the exoneration from sin validly effected in Jesus, we may count on this nature of ours and its innocence as we could not otherwise do. This judicial pardon gives us the courage and shows us the way to think about man as God created him. It is the true ground of theological anthropology.[192]

Barth's anthropology is Christological throughout. The theme was explored in depth in the small separate volume

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[190] Ibid., p. 27

[191] Ibid., p. 68

[192] Ibid., pp. 48-49

Christ and Adam: Man and Humanity in Romans 5.[193] Jesus is really the man which God willed. He is the man that God intended. We derive our real human nature from Him. "The nature of the man Jesus alone is the key to the problem of human nature. This man is man. . . . He alone is primarily and properly man."[194]

> . . . if we understand man in general from the humanity of Jesus Christ, it automatically follows that we have to understand him as God's creature, as the sinner pardoned by God, and as the heir-expectant of the coming Kingdom of God. In these relations we recognize ourselves, not as in the mirror of an idea of man, but as in the mirror of the Word of God which is the source of all truth. And it is obviously not in the framework of unguaranteed concepts arising from these relations, that our sanctification, and the significance of the claim and decision and judgment of the divine command, can and must be understood.[195]

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A question must now be asked regarding the extent to which Barth isolates the theological ethic. He does deal with the "Phenomena of the Human." Man IS, and remains, the creature of God, but other sources of general knowledge, says Barth, can offer "symptoms" of the real man.[196] These symptoms are always relegated to a secondary role, but nonetheless, natural science, idealistic ethics, existential philosophy, and theistic anthropology play their part in Barth's information about the phenomena

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[193] Translated by T. A. Smail (New York: Harper's, 1957)

[194] Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 2, p. 43

[195] Ibid., vol. 2, part 2, pp. 549-50

[196] Ibid., vol. 3, part 2, pp. 200 ff.

of man. These sources do not draw their information from the Word or Revelation but, says Barth, this does not mean that what they know about man is "false and worthless." Theological anthropology - the Barthian anthropology of the real man - "is prepared to welcome all such general knowledge,"[197] as long as we understand that it cannot lead us to the knowledge of the real man, Jesus.

In that examination of the partial phenomena, science can never be judged the enemy of the Christian confession. It becomes the enemy "only when it dogmatizes on the basis of its formulae and hypothesis, becoming the exponent of philosophyand world view, and thus ceasing to be an exact science."[198] "Our differentiation from it," says Barth, "need not imply opposition."[199]

With Barth, one does not investigate man with the hope of understanding his basic nature. The theologian, and the man, who does not know himself already as the covenant partner of God in Christ, before he approaches his investigation of the phenomena of man, "will always look on the wrong side." Knowledge of "The real man" must precede it.

The intent of Barth's position here is compatible

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[197] Ibid., p. 202

[198] Ibid., p. 23

[199] Ibid., p. 25

with this thesis. When the scientist goes beyond the phenomena regarding man into the inner reality which distinguishes the real man from the partial man, then that scientist, says Barth, becomes a Word-of-God theologian. He is bound by the concerns regarding man as the Creature of God!

It is never, for example, that the evolutionary origin of man would be contested by the Word-of-God theologian. Nor is it that the Scriptures would be set against the findings of evolutionary science. It can be seen as we cite one of the longest footnotes in the Dogmatics. Barth gives an example of his own use of outside information with reference to the evolutionary origin of man. During the latter years of the nineteenth century, some doubt arose of the position of man in the universe. Barth relates three separate "so-called" apologetic attempts to support the uniqueness of man in creation.[200] Zockler, e.g., emphasized "the psychological gulf which exists between man and the animals." Otto, in the early twentieth century, held that "while evolutionary theory can have no detrimental effect on a religious outlook," man also has a "completely new and characteristic creation: the world

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[200] Ibid., vol. 2, part 2, pp. 79-90. One wishes that Barth had chosen some other specific examples of apologetics, and more specially in the way of better known theologians. But the point we are making here regarding Barth's use of science does not depend on his particular choices.

and life of the spirit."[201] In his intellectual life and in this other world of the spirit, man attains to personality; and "Personality constitutes the clear and secure distinctiveness from the whole world and all other being; it establishes a self-enclosed world of its own, free and superior to all other becoming and perishing."[202] Titus, later in Natur and Gott, 1926, goes further to admit that the "Human psyche cannot be excluded from the general process of evolution," but anticipating the kind of Christo-centered anthropology in Barth, Titus wrote that "the religious ideal of man results only from the supreme religious ideal and therefore from the person of Jesus Christ and His ideals."[203]

Further, Barth adds to these apologetic summaries some observations of Adolf Portman,[204] from Biologische Fragmente zu einer Lehre vom Manschen (1944). Evolution, Barth interprets Portman as saying, is only "one interpretation of life" which must be brought into the sphere of

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[201] Ibid., vol. 3, part 2, p. 82

[202] Ibid.

[203] Ibid., p. 83

[204] Adolph Portman is a German biologist whose most recent book has been translated into English. Cf. New Paths in Biology, esp. pp. 145-148. (New York: Harper and Row, 1964) Portman does note a cautionary attitude toward accepting Darwin's Natural Selection as the total explanation of the origin and significance of man. He emphasizes rightly that life must be examined on two levels: in our subjective experience of living, as well as from the subject of matter itself. He is incidently the only biologist who is used by Barth throughout his exploration of the subject of man.

faith. There is a possibility in Barth that either Darwinism, or the Theory of Evolution itself, might not be an adequate explanation for the nature and origin of physical life as we know it. Portman implies no such thing, and certainly Barth does not deny an evolutionary origin, although it does appear at times that he might wish it were not so! Portman's aim is to emphasize human particularity by means of biological research. Man differs from the rest of nature in his prolonged period of infancy, and in his universal "one year premature birth" which indicates an adjustment which is made on the pre-natal, or at least the pre-conscious level. Man develops an increased individuality and his body and soul appear in man as a unity.

> His (man's) biological singularity consists in the indissoluble connexion (peculiar to each individual) - sic - between his inherited tendencies and development on the one hand, and his experience of history on the other. "Life requires more from man than the modest certainty which the fragments of factual research can offer us."[205]

So said Portman.

Barth wrote that man's distinctive nature cannot be rooted in the characteristics he has developed which are not present in the beasts.[206] There can be nothing in the phenomenon which distinguishes man from the rest of creation; however individual or praise-worthy or especially unique it might seem.

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[205] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 2, p. 87

[206] The point Barth is making here is one that we also accept in this thesis.

> If there is a secure human life, unshakeably sure and conscious of its humanity and therefore its differentiation from the Chimpanzee, it will not be the life which consists in the phenomena which even at best can be demonstrated by science only with a modest certainty.[207]

In so many significant ways, there can be no doubt that we are different, very different, from our animal cousins. "But what have we really seen when we have seen such phenomena? True man? Certainly not."[208]

If we begin a long list of all the good things we have over the beasts, we are faced immediately with the proposition that we are making the list, according to what we now know about ourselves and the beasts. We can brag about ourselves, but animals which are ranked much lower in the process are gifted with some especial kinds of talents which Barth says "put man in the shade." Beyond that, for all we know, the animals may have possibilities - unknown to us - which are outside of the phenomena we investigate. In the end, it is possible that our listing could be reversed, or almost certainly modified.[209]

Then, the question arises, would we have the right to "regard man as higher and better"?[210] Barth's answer is negative again, for "the value of the distinct phenomena is

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[207] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 2, p. 88

[208] Ibid., p. 89

[209] The amusing comment made by Professor Waddington, referred to on page 140 is immediately brought to mind. Said Waddington, "I will listen to the argument that a worm is superior only when the worm himself comes to present it."

[210] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 2, p. 89

not itself a phenomenon but the subject of a judgment which has not the slightest connexion with the observation of the facts." For, suggests Barth, what if we reversed the evaluations at that point? What if we regarded, with Schopenhauer, that man's striving is the cause of his suffering, and that the "much boasted mind of man" was the source of his disease?

> All that is really certain is that the circle of man's supposed self-knowledge is nowhere so visible as in the fact that our real advance upon the animal causes us to regard ourselves as really different from the latter.[211]

Barth suggests in the end, with characteristic humour, that we are certain only that we are better; but the only proof of our advance is the courage and the nerve to make that claim.

There is a parallel here between the kind of information which Barth brings to the study of the nature of man and that which he allows for the man making his ethical choices. In the ethical situations, we can also investigate the various types of collateral information which we can discover. But ultimately we are not arriving at a legitimate ethical decision. We make that only in the command which God issues, which may or may not be confirmed in the other ethical deliberations which we undertake.

We must know man, as we <u>know</u> ethics, says Barth, from the original source, and only there.

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[211] Ibid., p. 89

> If man does not know himself already, long before his attention is directed to these phenomena, he will be blind even though he sees. In face, and in spite of these phenomena he will always look on the wrong side. He will always think he should convince himself that his own reality consists in what he has in common with the animal and the rest of creation generally. Thus even from this standpoint the knowledge and interpretation of phenomena of the human is limited, conditional, and relative knowledge. The knowledge of man himself must precede it, and this has roots in a very different soil.[212]

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The separation is clear. But paradoxically, at least in his latter writings, Barth actually encourages the use of collateral information from the natural sciences and other sources, which help to describe the phenomena of the tentative man. To understand fully, says Barth, or rather to understand the one who is fully man, we must first annex this knowledge and subdue it, just as surely as the knowledge of the Command of God must annex the other fields of ethics as the Israelites annexed Canaan. But it must come only in the second place, following the real man.

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[212] Ibid., p. 90

b. The Command and its Intrusion on Man

The second concern in our criticism of Barth's ethic lies in his analysis of the divine command and the way that command is received by man. We argue that his analysis is based on a fundamental misconception of the capabilities of man to receive the divine instruction. In God Here and Now, Barth wrote that: Christian ethics is the attempt to repeat in human words and with human concepts the divine commandment."[213] Man's goodness is based upon his openness to receive the command. The Christian, says Barth, can reduce the urgent ethical questions to one: How may I be impartial to the truth of the Creator?[214] The believer can begin his ethical quest with the knowledge that God has already provided the answer - and the answer is specific. The Christian answer does not belong to the group of answers which man himself can give and is accustomed to receive. Nothing which comes on the "basis of his reason, his conscience, or on the basis of his knowledge and history. . . . Christian ethics answers the call from God" . . . you have heard O man, what is good.[215] The Christian is able to receive,

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[213]Barth, God Here and Now, p. 87

[214]Karl Barth, The Word of God and the Word of Man, translated by Douglas Horton (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1928), p. 148

[215]Barth, God Here and Now, p. 86

hear, and act upon a specific command from God: What he "ought" to do has already been spoken for him.

The difficulty we note here is that Barth provides no way in which one can determine whether there is a specific command or not; or if there is, how one can be certain that what he decides at the moment is actually the command. Barth declares that the ethic gives freedom; and that it is in correspondence with the Grace of God. But what actually occurs as it develops in Barth's writing, is not unlike the ethical process which occurs in many other ethical pursuits. Where the Christian is deciding what the command of God could be, he still is in the human predicament, deciding within his culture, and within the limitations of his individual person. Believing that the command has already been spoken, or that it is in the process of being spoken, is just one of the factors involved in making the choice.

We want to know from Barth how the man can know that he has heard the specific command of God. Barth anticipates that question and attempts an answer:

> The objection that the divine will is not known to to us, or not sufficiently known, in its definiteness, is not only futile but cunning and deceitful because it makes a virtue or an excuse out of our need, . . . so that we are acquitted in advance if in our arbitrary choice between the many possibilities open to us we may not coincide with the will of God.[216]

Later, he reiterates that "God intends and finds and reaches

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[216] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 2, part 2, p. 670

man in the most detailed way when He gives His command."[217]

> He (God) does not give us a selection of possibilities between which we must decide according to this or that rule. He confronts us with a concrete necessity in relation to which obedience puts us in the right and disobedience in the wrong.[218]

And:

> It cannot be said of any other commands in themselves and as such that they are permissions, releases, liberations; that they give us freedom. On the contrary, their commanding is in every respect a holding fast, a binding, a fettering. . . . their bidding is a forbidding.[219]

"The command of God sets men free. The command of God permits. It is only this way that it commands.[220]

The gift of freedom is one of the foundations of the Barthian ethic. We ask here concerning how this command which brings freedom can be shown to be the specific command of God. Man has freedom before God; he has freedom in fellowship; he has freedom for life; and he has freedom in limitation itself. "The decisive significance attributed to the concept of freedom in Barth's ethics," writes Hartwell,

> can be inferred from his characterization of the divine gift of freedom as the foundation of Christian ethics, and of Christian ethics as the reflection upon what man is required to do in and with the gift of freedom.[221]

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[217] Ibid., p. 710

[218] Ibid.

[219] Ibid., p. 585

[220] Ibid.

[221] Hartwell, Theology of Karl Barth, p. 161

The Command of God, to Barth, is the renewed offer of grace which will make man free. The freedom, to man, is the God-given freedom to obey.[222]

> A free man is one who chooses, decides and determines himself and who acts according to his thoughts, words, and deeds. The course of his actions is a consequence of the nature of his God-given freedom. . . . Man does the good when he acts according to the imperative inherent in the gift of freedom. He does the evil when he obeys a law that is contrary to his freedom.[223]

We have no quarrel here with Barth's exposition of the divine command and its will for our good and our freedom. Neither do we object to the demand which Barth insists that it makes upon us. In most of the details of this section of his argument we could readily agree. The question still concerns the man himself: Does the freedom which God confers in Barth's ethic, also free man from his manhood? Can we be certain that the freedom is not dependent on the instinctive feelings or rational conclusions of the individual involved?

In addition to this freedom, Barth suggests another way to determine if the command of God is present. "It will not appeal to his fear, but to his courage."[224] That has an authentic sound, but doors of compulsion can be opened in many other ways. Psychiatric counseling, Masonic

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[222]Barth, Humanity of God, p. 82

[223]Ibid., p. 84

[224]Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 2, part 2, p. 586

meetings, new jobs, an inheritance, mystical meditation, pop art, and ecology rallies have all been credited recently with opening the doors of compulsion and offering freedom to the individual. A Captain in the fields of World War II, Ian Smith in Rhodesia, Eldridge Cleaver at a Black Power Rally, Mau-Mau warriors - each commanding something other and different, and often antithetical - appeal to courage and not to fear. Unless Barth wishes to attribute some sort of equal merit, which is obviously nonsense, he would have to define the distinguishing characteristics of the command in some more convincing manner.

Barth counters the objection with the answer that "The problem of distinguishing the command of God from other commands narrows down accordingly to that of distinguishing Jesus Christ from all other lords."[225] The person of Christ, he says, is ultimately the fullness of the divine command. Again, Barth implies that the believer in Christ receives an explicit directive that the Lord Jesus Christ is to be served in this specific way.

Christ is part of the ethical process. As James Gustafson has made clear in his recent Christ and the Moral Life: "The moral life is a life of discipleship to Christ," writes Gustafson.

> It is not to be determined by one's loyalty to the community of family, or university, or nation, or

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[225] Ibid., p. 608

> ecclesiastical affiliation, but to find one's way in and through these in loyalty to him.[226]

"The Christian finds Christ to be a norm that illuminates his options and, insofar as he is loyal to Christ, deeply conditions his choice."[227] That is not to say, as Barth does, that the choices and the options are dictated by Christ. "The analyses and choices made are human, and are made by finite creatures with various biases and perspectives."

> . . . as the effects of human agency they can never claim divine sanction unambiguously. Agency, the capacity to decide, to act, to initiate and respond, is not only our human condition, but it is such by creation, and I believe it necessarily is respected by the providential power of God.[228]

No statement could better epitomize our objection to the way in which Barth teaches that the specific command of God is revealed to the individual Christian. The "capacity to decide, to act and initiate" exists in creation. We believe the "providential power of God" respects that capacity in ethical choices.

God is involved in the ethical decision and with the man who acts. "Who is the man who acts?" Barth answers:

> He is the creature of God, namely, the one whom God had in view when he created heaven and earth, determining him as His covenant-partner and finally for participation in His eternal life. He is the sinner to whom God in His wonderful freedom is gracious. That is, he is the being who has disobeyed God, broken the covenant, denied his own nature and missed his vocation, yet to whom God is faithful quite apart from

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[226] Gustafson, Christ and Moral Life, p. 270

[227] Ibid., p. 268

[228] Ibid.

> and in defiance of his deserts, so that without being worthy of it he may hold fast to His promise in faith, live by His forgiveness and hope in Him. And he is the child of the Father led by the Spirit, who as the time of contradiction, conflict and suffering moves to its end already lives in hope in the presence of God's future and final revelation which will fully reveal him as that which he is even now. The man who is in the ethical event acts in the light of the divine command is to be consistently understood as this being.[229]

That would do for a beginning to a Christian understanding of man. Man is all that. But he is also a being driven by conflicting motives over which he has not managed conscious control, and through which the revelation and the command must come.

Another possible mediator for the command would be ethical discussions of the conscience of man. To Barth, conscience is "the totality of our self-consciousness insofar as it can receive and proclaim the Word and therefore the command of God as it comes to us."[230] Later he writes that, "the concept of conscience cannot be classed as an anthropological but only as an eschatological concept"; and that "it is only in the light of the integral connexion of our existence with that of Jesus Christ, in the light of the future consummation which is our inheritance and possession in Jesus Christ, that conscience or our self-consciousness can be understood and claimed as the organ of the divine will."[231] Conscience knows the command of God, but "the command is not revealed and given

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[229] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 4, p. 25

[230] Ibid., vol. 2, part 2, p. 667

[231] Ibid.

by conscience but to conscience."[232]

> If only ethics could reveal to man from the very beginning that in wrestling with the problem of his good or evil actions he is not confronted with his conscience, with the kairos, with his own judgement, with any visible or invisible law of nature or history, with any individual or social ideals, and least of all, with his own arbitrary will. If only ethics could tell him that as a free man he is confronted with the will, word, and deed of the free God.[233]

Would that we could deal with a man who is in such full communion with God that we could believe that his conscience is the voice of God. But the inner voice which speaks is as complex in voice as it is in origin. Barth writes as if no psychological studies had ever been conducted, and as if the origin of the super-ego, and the development of the moral idea in a child had never been investigated.

Barth, too, is obviously aware that the Will and Word of God will often be obscured from the individual. But, he writes:

> The obscurity of God's will in a particular case always arises on man's side, not on God's. And the question which requires clarification in each particular case is not what the command is, but how it stands with the man confronted by it.[234]

But that is only partly true. If we grant that there is a specific command of God for each specific ethical event, we are still left with the problem of separating the "command" from other "commands," and must inquire both about the nature of the command and the nature of the man who is

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[232] Ibid.

[233] Barth, Humanity of God, pp. 85-86

[234] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 4, p. 12

confronted by it. "How it stands with the man confronted by it" - to us - is simply another way of saying that when the will of God is obscure, we must examine the cultural, psychological, biological and religious elements of the whole ethical event.

The "religious element," in this case the belief that a command from God is already issued, is one of the circumstances which surround the decision. Rather than begin by asking "What has God commanded?", we should ask both "What does God require in this situation?", and "How am I best able as a man to meet the requirement?" The first question is akin to Barth's. The second is not. To understand how I can meet the requirement, I have first to understand the predicament of the human situation, and then evaluate what can become the Word of God. What I think is the will of God is also part of what I have received. With that knowledge, I am forced to inquire whether there is a command, how I can interpret it correctly, and how in the end, with the problems of human existence, I can act. He writes:

> Who among us ever hears the Word of God so perfectly as to see this context in all its fullness? It is enough that it exists, and that God knows and rules it. This is the case even when man is not conscious himself at all, when he is not yet or no longer a Christian.[235]

But it is not enough! We must conclude that Barth has no satisfactory answer to the question of how the individual man can know the specific command of God.

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[235] Ibid., p. 26

4. Special Ethics: Some Problems and Possibilities

a. Introduction

Our critique here is not aimed at the ethical conclusions which Dr. Barth suggests. Often we can endorse the way he approaches many of these topics. One can hardly read the Dogmatics and not be touched by the compassionate concern of this mighty theologian.[236] Some of the polemic which is leveled against his "irrelevant ethic" would be eliminated if the critics were to read his special ethics in detail.

We are concerned with the manner in which Barth arrives at his ethical spheres and frame of reference. Barth's instructions for the ethical event are received from the Word of God, but his moral opinions consistently reflect many of the cultural norms and sanctions which others receive from other sources. If it is alone the Word of God which determines Barth's ethical conclusions, then let us say that it is also the word of man. When

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[236] One cannot miss the scope of his ethical concern, where, e.g., Barth applies his ethic to "near and distant neighbors"; or where, in the middle of his discussion of "The Holy Day," Barth soars into a remarkable paean of praise on what the joy of living is; or how in the section on "childless couples," he offers compassionate supportive counseling and encouragement to all those who have not been blessed with children.

Barth comes down to discuss the problems of the earth, he utilizes some of the ethical attitudes of human nature as an integral part of his ethical formulations. Not to over-simplify, but what we really find are the well written opinions of a certain Swiss professor of theology who is kindly disposed to certain fundamental ideas of historical Christian practice, and laments their passing in the twentieth century; but who, at the same time, is moderately progressive on many socio-economic, and personal ethical problems which an enlightened bourgeois gentleman of our time must inevitably face. The revelation of the special command of God the Creator is mediated by the particular culture and circumstances in which the problems and the projected solutions occur. Where his ethical analysis is most helpful, it is usually because he has indirectly noticed sources within the life process. Where he is incorrect, or irrelevant, in our judgment, is often at the point where he has ignored or misinterpreted the kind of scientific and cultural information regarding both the non-rational origin of morals, and the necessary background information on the event itself.

For example, the first ethical problem which Barth discusses, and the one which to him is first in importance, is the problem of "Sabbath Observance." We have no cause to argue that Barth is right or wrong. Assume for the moment that Dr. Barth is correct. What we want to ask then, is on what authority can such an announcement be made? Some

other might answer because the Bible teaches it; the Fourth Commandment does after all say "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." But, Barth would not give that answer. He says he will answer it in accordance with the divine command of the Living Christ, and the particular ethical event as it is described in the sphere, or the relationship, of God the Creator and man the creature.

> What can ethics do in this matter? . . . its proper contribution to the problem of Sunday is necessarily the proclamation of the Gospel, of the history of salvation and the end, and this will always become the proclamation of the Sabbath commandment . . .[237]

It will take place in the context of holiness. Barth writes that "His command says that man is to keep His day Holy, as a day of worship."

It is not just a general entreaty to be worshipful and to be devoted the whole day to heavenly thoughts. The day, says the command, will have certain characteristics which will specify the "holiness": "We may well say that without rest from work and participation in divine service, there is no obedience to the Sabbath commandment."[238]

Barth ties the solution of his "first ethical problem" to the belief that God must be first in our thoughts and acts. Sabbath observance shows that we put God first. The Sabbath commandment explains all other commandments. "The holy day does not belong to man, but to God." And,

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[237] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 2, part 4, pp. 66-67

[238] Ibid., p. 60

"He who has a self-renouncing faith on Sunday will have it also throughout the week."

If Barth were using the day as a symbol, there would be less objection. Man's relationship with God is of first importance. But, to Barth it is far more than a symbol, it is an actual ethical command, that Sunday, The Lord's Day, Sontag itself, be celebrated and observed. Man is then to pause from his work, and to attend divine service; and then, but only then, is he offered refreshment for his spirit.

Barth notes that there could be other good reasons for selecting the one day of rest in seven: reasons from the humanitarian side: in the necessities of physical rest, psychological peace, or social hygiene.

> Yet this humanitarian basis has the necessary force and authority only when it derives its strength from the first and true basis of the commandment . . . Where it is simply asserted as a postulate of human nature and reason, many a counter-basis and sundry individual and social needs can be objected against it on the ground of the same source of knowledge.[239]

Barth's ethical instruction now becomes pre-eminently clear. Man is not entitled to establish any ethical instruction from a source other than the Command, which is independent from all other sources. And, if Barth be accepted for what he says, all other "humanitarian" reasons, good as they might otherwise be, are of no use in Barth's special ethics.

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[239] Ibid., p. 61

Barth's command says that Sabbath observance will bring rest and refreshment to the soul. Could it not also be an equal consideration, that rest and refreshment should be brought to the body; when after six days of work in the classroom, or in the church, or in the hospital surgical room, a day of exercise and hard work in the country, could be more beneficial to the Christian, than a seventh day of rest and worship and prayer? And could not the same Christian, who also desires to place God first, not miss divine service, work all day Sunday, and go to Men's Club at the First Presbyterian Church on Tuesday noon; or go out to serve God's people in the ghetto on Friday evening? The needs and the necessities of the human individual are involved integrally in the process of decision itself. Barth writes of the peculiar work of going to church on Sunday; to which the "nature-lover, the sportsmen, the spiritually minded lover of solitary contemplation, and even the ordinary man bent on a lie-in . . . now that he is released from the labours of the week, and especially those of Saturday evening," all object.

> But "When the Gospel, the good news, breaks through and asserts itself in this commandment; when the history of salvation and the end is heard in all its glory; when man grasps it as an invitation to keep to God's grace and rejoice in it, then he will cleave to the congregation, and will definitely go to Church on Sunday, just as he will also not begrudge himself and others the rest from work.[240]

The "command" soon enough becomes a "commandment"!

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[240] Ibid., p. 64

Many lament the passing of the Sabbath observance in our modern world. And, while we would not transfer the range of ethical concern out into the lowlands of non-theological ethical reflection, and consider only the cultural, social, and psychological needs of the individuals involved, we would insist that these sources can influence the command (or the commandment) and help to shape an answer that would do justice to the demands and needs of the individual as well as worship and service to God.

b. The Problem in Special Ethics

Barth discusses "the problem of special ethics" at great length at the beginning of this volume (III, part 4). First he draws a distinction between "general ethics" and "special ethics."[241] "General Ethics," which forms part of the Doctrine of God: "is a question of understanding generally the fact and extent that human sanctification and therefore good human action are effected by the action of God in His command."[242] General ethics has to show how the command is the claim made by God on the man and how he may accept it; it shows that the command "is always God's decision"; and it shows that the command is God's judgment on man, but also it shows his grace, "by which man is at once condemned and acquitted and thus becomes free for eternal life." The last is "the final goal and the original purpose of the command of God" - to make him free.

> Good human action is action set free by the command of God, by His claim and decision and judgment. This is the general answer which theological ethics has to give to the ethical question.[243]

"Special ethics" is a matter of following through on

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[241] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 4, pp. 3 ff. All following references to vol. 3, part 4.

[242] p. 4

[243] p. 5

this original purpose and goal. We have to follow the command from God to man. The command of God "does not hang ineffectively in the air"; it becomes concrete and goes "into the distinctive lowlands of real human action and therefore into the sphere of concrete human volition, decision, action and abstention, into the events of this particular man."[244]

Special ethics is seen in other places, as a set of Biblical texts and concomitant sets of moral rules which are to be applied to the ethical event; "the ethic which in church history bears the name of casuistry." Casuistry does have a particula veri, and there is a "practical casuistry," says Barth. It is an enticing approach for it gives a security to the individual and removes the burden of decision; but "it is basically unacceptable, . . . however convenient it would be both for spiritual advisors and above all for troubled souls."[245]

(1) If special ethics become casuistry, this means that the moralist wishes to set himself on God's throne. . . . Casuistry is a violation of the divine mystery in the ethical event.[246]

(2) Casuistical ethics makes the objectively untenable assumption that the command of God is a universal rule . . . But it is always an individual command for the conduct of this man, at this moment and in this situation.[247]

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[244] p. 6 , vol. 3, part 4

[245] p. 8

[246] p. 10

[247] p. 11

> It commands not only how man is to think and act here and now, but also quite specifically what is to take place inwardly in his mind and thoughts, and outwardly in what he does or refrains from doing.

Then Barth goes on significantly to write:

> It (the Command) leaves nothing to human choice or preference. It thus requires no interpretation to come to force. To the last and smallest detail it is self-interpreted, and in this form it confronts man as a command already in force.
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> . . . The obscurity of God's will in a particular case always arises on man's side, not God's, and the question which requires clarification in each particular case is not what the command is, but how it stands with the man confronted by it.[248]

That also, says Barth, is the way the command came to those in the Holy Scriptures,"not as rules, and axioms, and general moral truths," but in "unique and singular orders." "Their common import consists in the fact that it is always the same divine Overlord who in this way confronts various men."

(3) The third argument against casuistry is that it "also involves an encroachment, . . . and a destruction of Christian freedom." Man is expected to offer himself to God, not to follow the instruction of a particular moralist. "Casuistry destroys the freedom of this obedience. It openly interposes something other and alien between the Command of God and the man who is called to obey Him."[249]

Having argued that the casuistical approach to ethics is unacceptable, Barth faces the alternative. If moral rules are not to be applied to individual situations, then is man

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[248] p. 12, vol. 3, part 4

[249] p. 14

left to operate ethically on a moment-to-moment, catch-as-catch-can, do-what-you-like ethic? Barth answers an emphatic: "No, of course not!" This cannot be what we mean. Here Barth gets to the heart of "the problem in special ethics": How one can abandon casuistry in ethics, where rules, axioms, and principles can be systematized and imposed, and not adopt a situational or an anti-nomian ethic in which each individual forms his own answer to each individual ethical situation without reference or guidance from beyond the situation. What should, or can, be substituted for dictates, rules and laws.

Others have attempted to answer this problem in modern ethical thought. Joseph Fletcher[250] and Bishop J. A. T. Robinson[251] have offered a type of "situationalism" that emphasizes the ethical event itself and the requirements inherent in it, mainly the requirement of Christian love. J. H. Oldham[252] and John C. Bennett[253] have offered a "middle axiom" ethical reflection that has the merit of bringing the best from casuistical ethics into contact with

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[250] See Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966); and Moral Responsibility (London: SCM Press, 1967)

[251] Bishop J. A. T. Robinson, Honest To God (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963); and Christian Morals Today (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964)

[252] Oldham originated the term "middle axioms" back in 1937, following the Oxford Conference. Cf. The Function of the Church in Society (1937)

[253] Cf. esp. The Achievement of John C. Bennett, by David H. Smith (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), esp. pp. 133 ff. Or Bennett's Christian Ethics and Social Policy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946)

the best of our concern for the ethical event. Barth himself mentions the writings of D. Bonhoeffer,[254] with his concept of "mandates" that concern the "whole man and all men." Brunner's concept of "orders,"[255] Barth rejects almost completely. Paul Althaus'[256] dependence on the environment in which the ethical event takes place is also rejected as "missing the event." N. H. Søe receives criticism for going to the other extreme and offering "a piecemeal ethics," which is never more than a reference to the ethical event.[257]

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Barth's own constructive effort to solve the "problem of the horizontal" is one of the most important ethical statements in our day. Special ethics "always speak with reference to God's concrete command, and man's concrete obedience or disobedience."[258] It is a concrete and specific command, but it is not only "in a series of innumerable revelations." God's mercy is new every morning, but God

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[254] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 4, p. 10, 14-15, esp. 21-22 and cf. D. Bonhoeffer Ethics, translated by Eberhard Bethge (London: SCM, 1955)

[255] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 4, p. 20, etc., and cf. Brunner's The Divine Imperative (London: The Lutterworth Press, 1937, translated Wyon)

[256] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 4, pp. 20-21, and see Paul Althaus, The Divine Command, translated by Franklin Sherman (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966)

[257] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 4, pp. 22-23

[258] Ibid., p. 16

is One and He is true to Himself, so that "in all the infinite diversity . . . we have . . . a single and unitary command."

Not only is God one, but all the individual ethical acts are the "action of the same subject, of man, this man." Man is one, too. As the vertical intersects the horizontal, as "One God" meets the one man, there is a constancy of the command and the action of man. "The references to the vertical . . . cannot remain a mere point but must become linear."[259] The function of special ethics in that regard, to Barth, is a service in this "formed reference." It does not pronounce judgment, but it gives "definite instructions" with regard to the event.[260]

> Special ethics can then become the investigation and representation of the character which this event will always take, of the standard by which the goodness or evil of human action will be decided, not by the moralist, and his ethic, but by God the Commander.[261]

Everything, though, depends upon whether anything can be known about the "continuity and constancy of the divine command and human action."[262] We receive our knowledge about this horizontal by God's word - or not at all. Man must be instructed by God Himself, and by His Word, "regarding the connexion, the permanence, continuity, and in which

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[259] Ibid., pp. 17-18

[260] Ibid., p. 18

[261] Ibid.

[262] Ibid., p. 18

it takes place."[263] The two factors which are present in every ethical event - God with His claim upon man and man the active subject - are both "revealed in the Word of God, in Jesus Christ."[264]

In that revelation we find the commanding God and His command: "as the command of the One who is man's Creator, Reconciler and Redeemer, surrounding and holding him fast."[265] Corresponding to the three persons in the Trinity, Creator, Reconciler and Redeemer, we find the God who is involved in the ethical event. We also find the man, a creature of God, who "is the sinner to whom God is gracious . . . he is the child of the Father led by the Spirit."[266] That man is also one who is "certain of his eternal future."

If we accept the above information concerning God and man, we will see the basic clarity of Barth's special ethics. "Basic clarity" is probably an overstatement; but, Barth says "A moment in history" takes place between God and this man, and that is the nature of the constancy. "Special ethics is in general terms a commentary upon this history, to be drawn up with particular regard to this encounter."[267]

When The God meets This Man "then definite spheres

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[263] Ibid., p. 19 (all following are also vol. 3, part 4)

[264] p. 23

[265] p. 24

[266] p. 25

[267] p. 26

and relationships may be seen in which the encounter takes place."[268] These "spheres and relationships" are never to be regarded as "universal ethical truths," for they are only "the general form of the one and supremely particular truth of the ethical event." Yet, God uses these spheres, and the ethical event takes place in them, so that - "as with a mirror" - we can reflect into this or that sphere or relationship (say the historical outline of the encounter of God and man), and although we will not receive a definition or an exact summons as to what we do next: we will receive:

> a reference to it by which it is generally described in a way which is generally discernible and attested in a form which is generally valid; an ethical lead in which there is a perceptible approximation to this event; a directive, or rather, a series of directives, which give guidance to the individual in the form of an approximation to the knowledge of the divine command and right human action."[269]

The description of that reference, which is an approximation to the answer of what is good for man to do, then becomes as "intensive as possible, and the directives and directions as urgent and as binding as possible.[270] And, if we can take the ideal possibility of "full knowledge of definite spheres and relationships in which the ethical event takes place," then the definite directive takes on a sharpness which "almost acquires the character of an answer."

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[268] p. 29, Vol. 3, part 4, CD

[269] p. 30-31

[270] p. 31

Almost an answer, but not quite; for "ethics still will have to leave the final judgment to God." The question "gains in precision" as the knowledge becomes broader and deeper. And, if it adheres to the historical outlines of the spheres and relationships, "it certainly offers no less than guidance."[271] More than guidance will not be expected. "More than guidance" is either "arbitrary human assertion or the event of the revelation of which only God Himself can be the subject." "True ethics" gives "well-founded and legitimate witness, and therefore training in Christianity, and in the particular case of ethics training in keeping the command."

In short, Barth believes that if we could describe any particular "sphere," or "relationship" in which the particular ethical event takes place, the sphere, say, of the encounter of God the Creator with his creature; if we could understand that in this encounter God wills freedom for His creature; and if we could reflect on that description or reference, the ethical event itself; we could approximate a good ethical response, provided that we understand that the description et al comes only from the command. In the end, man must take a leap of obedience to the Word of God; not a leap per se, but a leap in obedience to the command as it comes to man.

It is consistent with the Barthian system to single

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[271] p. 31, CD, vol. 3, part 4.

out the command as the source of authentic information. Whatever objection we have to that belongs to his entire epistemological concept, and not to this specific reference. It is important only to note that Barth sets the concrete and specific command of God within that framework. The command is individual; but, roughly abbreviated, it will remain somewhat constant, as it corresponds to the relationship which the One God has to the one man, both being constants. As Professor James Whyte once remarked, "The command soon enough becomes a commandment." That, it often does. Barth is dogmatic on most ethical subjects.

We will move to some of the spheres of ethical events which Barth covers in this volume, and follow the consistency with which he applies the working principle of the special ethic. The solution to this "problem" is operative throughout. Barth "instructs" the concrete ethical event with a description of the sphere, imposing the information received from the command over and above other sources of knowledge. There are some qualifications to be made regarding his use of that concept, but they will arise individually <u>in situ</u>.

c. Man and Woman

The basic concept of man in Barth's theology includes the idea of man in fellow humanity, and in the first instance man with woman: male and female created He them. No man exists in isolation; "there is no abstract human but only concretely masculine or feminine being."[272] The details of this concept are worked out in three different sections of the Dogmatics Volume on Creation. We will deal briefly with each:

(1) Volume III, Part 1, Paragraph 41

There, in a lengthy exegesis of Genesis 2:18-25, Barth introduces his thesis: "Everything aims at one fact, to wit, that God did not create man alone, as a single human being, but in the unequal duality of male and female.[273] Man himself was created in such a way that "in the exercise of his genuine freedom he must will to confirm his humanity with this unequivocal Yes to the woman given to him."[274] Without woman, man would be without the glory which God intended. And, further in the prototype "from which it cannot depart," the relationship of man and woman has to be understood

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[272] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 2, p. 286

[273] Ibid., vol. 3, part 1, p. 288

[274] Ibid., p. 294

as described in the account of creation.[275] It is "primal history." Yet in fact, "man is no longer single but a couple. He no longer lacks the good thing which he lacked according to the judgment of God in verse 2:18 . . . The I has found its Thou and that means both."[276]

Barth then briefly notes the ordering: "The striking expression 'the man and his wife' points already to the definite order of this relationship."[277] Sexuality is considered in relation to procreation, and "for the sake of a son a man must seek his wife."[278] "The Old Testament does know a proper meaning and seriousness of the sexual relation as such. It is tied to procreation alone. That is why it ventures, in the voice of the prophet, to describe the connexion between Yahweh and Israel in terms of the relationship between man and wife."[279]

(2) Volume III, Part 2, Paragraph 45, Section 3

Barth builds somewhat on this first description of male and female, when he comes to the subject "Humanity as Likeness and Hope."[280] He affirms once more that "we cannot say man without having to say male or female and male and

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[275] Ibid., p. 305 (all following are also vol. 3, part 1)

[276] p. 308

[277] p. 308

[278] p. 312

[279] p. 319

[280] Ibid., vol. 3, part 2, pp. 285-324

female."[281] It is difficult to follow Barth completely, but he goes on to say that while there are other relationships with "fellow-humanity," such as fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, etc.,

> It is obvious that the encounter between man and woman is fully and properly achieved only where there is the special connexion of one man loving this woman and one woman loving this man in free choice and with a view to a full life-partnership.[282]

When God created man and woman, writes Barth, "He also creates their relationship, and brings them together."[283] They fulfill themselves in relationship with the other, in the order of subordination which is ordained by God. "This basic order of the human established by God's creation is not accidental or contingent. It cannot be overlooked . . . It is solidly and necessarily grounded in Christ, with a view to whom heaven and earth and finally man were created."[284]

> In the community this relationship cannot imperil either man or woman. . . . There is no cause to abolish it as though it were a mere convention. On the contrary, dishonour and harm are done both to man and to woman if this clear relationship is abolished.[285]

"Wives be subject to your husbands . . . for the husband is head of the wife even as Christ is head of the Church," is "the exegetical norm for all the other texts."[286] The wife

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[281] Ibid., vol. 3, part 2, p. 286 (all following are also vol. 3, part 2)

[282] p. 288

[283] p. 291

[284] p. 311

[285] p. 312

[286] p. 313

is to be subordinate to the husband, as the whole community of Christians - male and female - is to be to Christ. The husband has his subordination in that he should love his wife as himself, "willing for himself only as he wills her too."[287]

(3) Volume III, Part 4, Paragraph 54

When he comes to the ethics of the Doctrine of Creation, Barth gives an elaborate study of Man and Woman and the ethical problems which belong to that relationship. The ethical concerns of sexual intercourse are discussed in detail. Barth issues first the warning that we should never allow the subject to be isolated, and to let it become one of physical nature or natural impulses. "One can properly be concerned about sexual ethics only when one has a clear head and a firm heart."[288] It is, after all, still God's command which we are listening to, even in these lowlands of human experience.

> All this sexual experience takes place only in the totality and context of the life of each of the partners including the whole sphere of their encounter and co-existence: man and his fellow, Thou and I, as man and woman.[289]

We are not out to liberate ourselves from natural sex, Barth explained. It is an important part of the creation: "But

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[287] p. 316

[288] Ibid., vol. 3, part 4, p. 118

[289] pp. 130-31 (all following are also vol. 3, part 4)

it is only a single point in the line preceded and followed by others and together with the latter determined by the common origin and goal."[290] It is part of the goal regarding human sexual intercourse that the two shall become one flesh. In concern for the whole being of the other, Barth throws out the challenge:

> What are you, you man and woman, who are about to enter into sexual relations? What do you really want of each other? What is your business with each other? What have you in common? Is there any meaning in it? Is it demanded and sustained by your real life together? Is it justified and full of promise because at any rate you are honestly and resolutely on the way to achieving such fellowship . . .[291]

Barth addresses at length the question of the natural biological impulses towards sex: those who succumb to the biological urges, he says, are poorly endowed, rather than rich. Outbursts of sexuality are but self-centered bondage which merely exploits the nature of man. Sex, in the human situation, Barth says must be seen entirely differently from that in the rest of creation:

> In itself it is not a fundamental natural impulse which man has in common with animals and which has then to be morally controlled and directed. By nature it is a human sexuality, primarily and inwardly stamped and moulded by man's specific nature, and by the mental and spiritual structure of human life, and only on this basis capable of being understood biologically.[292]

Barth also discusses sexual restraint and discipline,

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[290] p. 131

[291] pp. 133-34

[292] p. 137

with especial reference to Charlot Strasser.[293] Strasser wrote that "we do violence to nature if we measure the nature of man by that of the animal."

> Human nature has a physical but also a psychical structure. Hence it is erroneous to suppose that human nature is frustrated if in the time of physical sexual maturity, it cannot be sexually active, but it must wait a suitable opportunity for this activity.[294]

Nobody, suggests Strasser, "has yet been made ill or destroyed through sexual diseipline."

So, continues Barth, everything which deviates from the exclusive psycho-physical relationship between two partners in marriage is indiscipline. "The humbug of the absolute necessity of sexual satisfaction in some way or another must be finally defeated." (Barth still quoting Strasser.)

The command of God brings certain insights into this sphere of human relationships which have to do with the theological knowledge which is received by the obedient servant. Barth does show an awareness of some of the literature which concerns human sexuality, and he often incorporates it into his text. At one time or another he deals with the writings of Simone de Beauvoir in Le Deuxieme Sexe (a flight from one's own sex); Nicholas Berdyaev in The Destiny of Man (the very opposite view of sexual polarity); Denis de Rougemont in L'Amour et L'Occident (clever and informative but in it "we jump out of the frying pan into the fire"); twice with

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[293] pp. 138-39

[294] p. 138

Theodor Bovet; Brunner and Søe are engaged frequently; T. van der Velde's marriage manual is mentioned and commended to the reader; and brief mention is made of D. H. Lawrence, Freud, Adler, Jung, Strasser, etc.

But a real description is not possible from these sources or any other and most of them fail by trying to describe man from outside the existence of the command. Typically, Barth writes that "Although we recognize their achievement we definitely reject every phenomenology or typology of the sexes."[295]

> We can describe individual man and woman . . . But we have to realize that when we say all this we merely point to something which cannot be expressed, to the mystery in which man stands revealed to God and to Him alone.[296]

But, however little we can actually describe, it is in that relationship of male and female, where each can and should affirm their sexuality. They can be "honestly glad of it, thanking God that they are allowed to be members of their particular sex, and therefore soberly and with a good conscience going the way marked out for them in this distinction."[297]

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How then shall we evaluate this description of what Barth has to say about the male and female in creation? In

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[295] p. 152

[296] p. 150

[297] p. 150

the first instance we can affirm the wholesome appreciation which Barth has for the sexual relationship in man. Throughout he elevates the study into the human sphere itself, and cautions against allowing sexuality to become a matter alone of the sex act.

And yet, in this strength, there is also the danger that Barth has spiritualized human sexuality too completely. It is one thing to say that sex is more than a biological urge. It is quite another to say, in quoting Strasser (whose book Barth described as a "parallelism to the Christian Truth"):

> The sexual impulse is through and through spiritualized in man. Beyond the biological need there stands spiritual decision. Love means much more than bodily satiety in sexual intercourse. Love is something beyond an organically conditioned disturbance of our ego below the navel.[298]

We choose this reference to Strasser for a double reason. First, it is an example of the way Barth uses outside sources of information, which he offers to advance his own position. But, secondly beyond the source of the information, it is the best example in this whole chapter of what Barth seems to mean regarding the real nature of the sexual impulse in creation, and the way it exists in man.

In actual fact, so far as experience and reflection can penetrate, the sexual impulse cannot be described as "through and through spiritualized in man." Its use might be said to be spiritualized, or at least we can say its use

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298 p. 139

ought to be spiritualized in man, but we cannot say that it is. The confusion in Barth, from the point of view of this thesis, is that the impulse itself, and the use to which rational and spiritual man puts it, have been made identical. To be sure our sexual need is more than "an organically conditioned disturbance of our ego below the navel" (an overly graphic phrase used by Barth which does not actually describe the location of the sexual impulse), but it is biologically conditioned as well. To understand the nature of man and his sexuality, we must understand also the sources of biological sexuality itself. The problem is not an unusual one in discussing Barth's ethics, but it is a particularly disturbing one when we come to the analysis of what man and his sexuality actually are. When Barth quotes Strasser and writes: "Nobody has yet been made ill or destroyed through sexual discipline." - we suspect the source of his information and add a warning. We conclude with words that are directly the antithesis of what is written by Dr. Barth; rather than NOT, we would write that sex "IS a fundamental natural impulse which man has in common with animals and which then has to be morally controlled and directed!" If that is not clear at the start, then all further discussion of specific ethical problems which arise out of that relationship will inevitably be influenced by this initial understanding.

Another specific objection which must be noted, is that Barth's theoretical construct regarding male and female

in creation makes it difficult for him to deal reliably with many of the ethical problems which arise in that sphere. Many of the ethical concerns which are controlled by this point are necessarily closed before discussion can be opened. Homosexuality, e.g., which we will discuss in greater detail, is immediately classed as perverse, because it is unnatural to this relationship as created by God. Monogamy is commanded not as a law or custom of any particular society, but because it receives justification in the higher court of the command, and the very nature of love and marriage call for a permanence of relationship with one man and one woman. Barth's consistent response comes directly out of this theoretical concept of what creation has commanded.

Further to that point, Barth's insistence that marriage is the ultimate end for man and woman, moves greatly in the direction of misunderstanding and denying the individuality of each person, male or female. Marriage is the standard by which the success of the relationship is judged:

> In our previous discussion we have been able to convince ourselves of the validity of the rule that in this matter everything is good which is in the full and strict sense is compatible with marriage, and everything is bad which is not so compatible.[299]

Barth does admit that every individual does not belong to marriage; some for good reasons remain outside of it, but it is the standard and light in which male-female is seen.

> Marriage is without doubt the telos, goal, and center of this relationship. We may provisionally define it as

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[299] p. 140

> the form of the encounter of male and female in which the free, mutual, harmonious choice of love on the part of a particular man and woman leads to a responsibly undertaken life-union which is lasting, complete, and exclusive.[300]

Finally we note that the near-literal rendition of the Biblical understanding of the subordinate position of women, does not allow for the cultural and historical conditioning which would give the moralist freedom to judge the ethical situation today. Proof of the fact, although incidental to the main theme in his writing, Barth referred to the feminist movement as a "more or less express and definite desire on the part of women to occupy the position and to fulfill the function of men."[301] And we have already noted that Barth opposed the writing of Simone de Beauvoir as trying to escape from her own sex.

Barth does not teach a distinct polarity of the sexes, or the kind of typology where the characteristics of male and female are distinct and even opposite. But "there is a distinction and it must not be blurred." The distinction does not necessarily relegate woman to an inferior place; it puts both sexes in "their proper place." All that is true, but it does lend itself to a workable subordination wherein scriptural and ethical support is given to man's supremacy in nature, marriage, and in life.

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[300] p. 140

[301] p. 155

d. Birth Control

From the man-woman basis in the creation, we can move into a few of the related ethical spheres, and examine what Barth counsels in the specific. One of these is the problem of birth control, where Barth's discussion is influenced by his general ethical understanding of the man-woman relationship. Barth asks the question whether birth control is permissible, or even obligatory, from the Christian point of view. In answer he observes first that there is no longer any fundamental differences in the attitude of Christians; for "increasingly an essentially affirmative answer is being given, not only by Christian doctors . . . but also partially, yet with a fundamentally decisive break from the former consistent negative, by the supreme teaching office of the Roman Catholic Church."[302] His own starting point is, as was also the starting point in the discussion of the problem of childless couples, "again the fact that post Christum natum the propagation of the race ("Be fruitful, and multiply," Genesis 1:28) has ceased to be an unconditional command." There may be a time and situation where a Christian community, "to awaken either a people or a

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[302] p. 268 (continuing in vol. 3, part 4)

section of people which has grown tired of life, and despairs of the future . . . should seriously try to maintain the race. But a general necessity in this regard cannot be maintained on a Christian basis."[303] In fact, in drawing a quotation from Emil Brunner, Barth concludes that the problem of overpopulation could really be "the greatest danger" we face today. From that standpoint there can be no valid objection to the practice of birth control.

But birth control within the specific relationship of the life-fellowship in marriage, says Barth, is rather different. There, as always, sexual intercourse is viewed as part of the life fellowship, which can exist and has a dignity and a right whether or not it leads to parenthood. But sexual intercourse has as "a first essential meaning, the fact that it is integral to the marital fellowship."

> Sexual intercourse performed for its own sake, whether within marriage or without, whether with or without birth control, is a non-human practice forbidden by the divine command.[304]

"Sexual intercourse should be performed in a way which implies that its meaning is simply the love relationship of the two partners," and that "can always be, not merely human action, but an offer of divine goodness made by the One who even in this last time does not will that it should be all up with us."

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[303] pp. 268-69

[304] p. 269

> Hence every act of intercourse which is technically obstructed or interrupted, or undertaken with no desire for children, or even refrained from on this ground, is a refusal of this divine offer, a renunciation of the widening and enriching of married fellowship which is divinely made possible by the fact that under the command of God this fellowship includes sexual intercourse.[305]

The use of birth control from that standpoint could be something "which the divine law strictly forbids." In their essential freedom, the couple, sharing a responsible act, will be faced with the fact that "it must and will be a choice and decision between Yes and No." A choice is necessary.

Some object that the matter of birth control and conception should be left to the "course of nature" or to "the rule of divine providence." Barth responds with a reasoned argument which he says shows the basic flaw in that objection. The providence of God and the course of nature are not identical, he says; they are not even on the same level.

> Surely the former cannot be inferred from the later. Surely the providence and will of God in the course of nature has in each case to be freshly discovered by the believer who hears and obeys His word, and apprehended and put into operation by him in personal responsibility, in the freedom of choice and decision.[306]

The decision to have a child must be given a specific answer. For the individual "is not allowed to dispense with rational reflection or to renounce an intelligent attitude at this point. The very opposite is the case. At this point

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[305] pp. 269-70

[306] p. 271

especially intelligent reflection may and must constantly and particularly prevail, and nothing must be done except in responsible decision."[307]

That being written, Barth then warns of the danger in such reflection which must be made. The actual danger is that "a divine gift may be refused and a child who might have been the light and joy of its parents is not generated." The opposite is also true; a child could be generated by not using birth control, a child which was not offered and affirmed by God. In either case the marital fellowship could be imperiled. But

> The danger of thus failing to do the will and command of God is no smaller, but also no greater, at this point than everywhere where responsible action and the venture of faith and obedience are required.
>
> The venture, however, is required at this point too. Hence it would be false to say that in view of the risk an unthinking laissez faire is better in this matter than action in free and responsibility and decision.[308]

Whatever the couple decides, they should decide it together and individually, says Barth, "and what happens, even if they are mistaken, will at least happen in responsibility and therefore in a right relation to the divine command."[309] The idea of birth control should be a positive choice, one which belongs in the context of the confidence of life that is grounded throughout in faith. And when

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[307] p. 270

[308] p. 271

[309] p. 272

either, or both of them deem it impossible "for one reason or another really to desire a child in the name of God and therefore in faith," they should choose to control conception. If their reasons "stand the test, they ought not to desire a child (again at the risk of being mistaken), and what happens will happen in responsibility and therefore in true relation to God's law."[310]

If a responsible couple has made the decision not to have a child, Barth then discusses the four possibilities of conception control: (1) the practice of complete sexual restraint; (2) sexual intercourse at times when the woman cannot conceive; (3) coitus interruptus; and (4) contraceptives. All four, says Barth have "the character of human arrangement and control. None is "natural" in any sense of the word, and all are painful and troublesome. Each is "unnatural and artificial."[311]

Sexual restraint, which was once the only choice, often is described as the "highest path," and the one which is heroic and virtuous. But it, too, is unnatural; for the sexual act is part of the fellowship of marriage; and also there are rather undesirable psychological repressions involved "which might have fatal consequences for the marital fellowship."

The second possibility, one which is called "the

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[310] p. 273

[311] p. 273

rhythm method" (not by Barth) does less violence and might be "the most feasible course of all." But control of birth by this proscribed method of abstaining when the woman is able to conceive, brings out the real and deeper question which cannot be avoided in choosing between alternatives. The real question is whether "we may exclude the possibility of procreation on our own judgment." That still is what is being done, unnatural as it is. Further the rhythm method removes the "spontaneity" from the marital act "with painful statistics and calculations."

> What becomes of its spontaneity if it necessarily involves a constant glancing at the calendar of conception? And what becomes of its character as the joyful consummation of marital fellowship if its spontaneity is threatened in this way.[312]

"Spontaneity" seems a particularly inappropriate selection of word with Barth who has throughout emphasized the aspect of decision making in this whole matter of birth control. The couple is charged with a responsibility and choice based on a thoughtful decision made in seeking the command of God. It seems an argumentum interruptum not to complain that the "rhythm method," because it requires some careful planning and decision making should be thought a threatening experience. Either a couple engages in "spontaneous intercourse" throughout, or they engage in thoughtful, rational choices.

To coitus interruptus Barth does not give the dignity

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[312] p. 274

of an argument. "We need not waste words however on the particularly unsatisfactory nature of this course . . . It constitutes 'a special threat'."

In the use of contraceptives Barth makes his defense against the "inflexible veto of the Roman Church." We must not suppose that in this method, "where the artificiality is so apparent, we enter the sphere of what is evil and illegitimate."

> The use of these means is not evil just because they are so manifestly artificial. It is evil when it takes place for reasons self-seeking, pleasure-seeking or expedience.[313]

Other methods are no less evil if they are adopted for those reasons; and the reverse is true as well - if they are all four not adopted for reasons of self-seeking then the intercourse without birth control is also evil.

No absolute preference can be given to any of the four,[314] says Barth, and none can be flatly rejected. No general rule can be set forth which would make the decision easier for the individual couple. "Does this mean that we can only conclude that in this matter each individual must choose and decide for himself in the freedom which faith confers?" "That is true enough," says Barth. The individual in the freedom of his faith may decide.

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[313] p. 275

[314] Although a careful reading of the text makes it clear that Dr. Barth obviously prefers the contraceptive method. The other three, including "rhythm" are shown in much darker contrast to what the correct choice might be.

But yet "we must mention and seriously insist" upon "certain universal principles which must govern the choice made." Those certain universal principles are three in number:[315]

> (1) The choice must take the form it does. It must be made and executed in faith, not in fear, doubt or dismay . . . in reliance upon God's forging grace.
>
> (2) Both of the partners must make the choice, "both act in full freedom . . . in such a way that they can be open with each other both before and after."
>
> (3) The choice must be made with due regard to the fact that so far as possible the inevitable painfulness of each available course must be the burden of the husband and not of the wife . . . it is the wife who is directly and primarily affected and concerned. . . . the fact that biologically she is always in greater danger than he is, and that she must therefore bear the lighter burden, he the heavier.

There Barth closes his discussion of birth control and moves back to the main concern of this chapter section, "Parents and Children."

It is somewhat difficult to reconcile all of what Barth writes here with what might be prescribed if he maintained an exact adherence to his general ethical approach. For one thing, it appears that the human situation of the twentieth century, with "its strange increase of population," has indeed influenced his ethical judgment. One gets the impression that if the situation could be reversed; and/or the Western World should decide to rid itself of "tiredness in life" and "despair of the future," they might justifiably re-institute the command to go on multiplying. As it is,

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[315] pp. 275-76

Barth's special ethic here arises within the cultural milieu of the twentieth century, with its peculiar problems, and the command is mediated through the needs of the time.

For another, the command instructs us that sexual intercourse must be understood always as a divine gift, never to be entered into lightly, for "a divine gift may be refused and a child who might have been the light and joy of its parents is not generated." It is literally true that a child which might have been conceived will not be, but Barth has wrongly transferred the topic and its ethical meaning back into the "sex as procreation" determination. If the human sexual act was "intended" only for procreation, and only incidentally for the expression of love, then Barth is warning about the seriousness of overlooking the possibility of conception each time birth control is practiced, might be in order. But sex is for recreation too; and especially in man, part of the joy and enjoyment of life. Barth's emphasis on the seriousness, the life-and-death-matter he makes out of it, the reasoning which must "stand the test," removes sexuality from the human situation in which it occurs, and by which standards it must be judged.

Barth recognizes part of that point when he separates "the course of nature" from "the providence of God." It is an emphasis on the conscious decision of man in the process, and the events which also influence him which would also separate "the course of the command" from "the course of man in nature and spirit."

e. Abortion

Barth's treatment of "Abortion" is another case in study. He introduces abortion under the section "The Protection of Life." The introduction to the section is hidden in the middle of a paragraph, and for several pages it is unclear that Barth intends abortion to be considered under the heading:

> Perhaps on the far frontier of all other possibilities, it may have to happen in obedience to the commandment that men must be killed by men.[316]

Barth's first contention is that in abortion we are "engaged in the killing of a human life." The unborn child is still a child; and Barth quotes from Charles Strasser's Der Arzt und das keimende Leben (1948) which holds that the embryo has its own brain, its own nervous system, its own blood circulation, and consequently has every right to be called an independent life, a child.[317]

So, says Barth,

> He who destroys germination life kills a man and thus ventures the monstrous thing of decreeing concerning the life and death of a fellow man whose life is given by God and therefore, like his own, belongs to Him.[318]

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[316] p. 415

[317] p. 416

[318] p. 416

The child has done nothing to deserve death, and man has no right to take it. The "child" is one for whom Christ also died and "The true light of the world shines already in the darkness of the mother's womb."

> And yet they want to kill him deliberately because certain reasons which have nothing to do with the child himself favour the view that he had better not be born.[319]

Barth continues:

> The fact that a definite No must be the presupposition of all further discussion cannot be contested, least of all today. The question arises however, how this No is to be established and stated if it is a truly effective No.[320]

The only thing that can help to establish it, Barth writes, is "the power of a wholly new and radical feeling of awe at the mystery of all human life as this is commanded by God the Creator, Giver and Lord."[321]

Then, in an abrupt reversal, or at least a startling qualification, Barth writes that the absolute prohibition of abortion prescribed in the past, is too forbidding and sterile to give effective help. "However dangerous it might sound . . . there is a forgiveness . . . even for the great modern sin of abortion."[322] And, so long as proper qualifications are enforced, certain abortions are justified. Human life, to Barth, is not the absolute, the will and

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[319] p. 416

[320] p. 417

[321] pp. 417-418

[322] p. 419

and command of God is; and "How can we deny absolutely that He might have commissioned them (doctors, etc.) to serve Him in this way (abortions)?"[323]

> Let us be quite frank and say that there are situations in which the killing of germinating life does not constitute murder but is in fact commanded.[324]

It will be in the form of rare exceptions, but if all possibilities to avoid it have been considered, it is possible that we can find the command in aborting.

But, having opened the subject up to consideration and possible decision, Barth closes it again with the qualification that life must be at stake against life:

> These situations may always be known by the concrete fact that in them a choice must be made for the protection of life, one life being balanced against another, i.e., the life of the unborn child against the life or health of the mother.[325]

Neither the life of the infant, nor the life of the mother is necessarily and always to be chosen, but the decision is to be made "not by the mother alone, nor the quacks" but by an experienced and trained physician.

Finally, he outlines four observations that will always have to be present when and if abortion is the command of God: (1) life must be at stake against life; (2) the "most scrupulous calculation" is required and yet also a resolute venture is to be taken"; (3) the "calculation

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[323] p. 420

[324] p. 421

[325] pp. 422-23

and venture" must take place before God and in responsibility to Him; and (4) since it is always dangerous, even only restricted to the life against life qualification, it should be executed only "in the faith that God will forgive the elements of human sin involved."

Barth's restriction of justifiable abortions to the "life against life" principle, outside of which it cannot be discussed because God commands against it, is another example of the way in which Barth shuts out all information and/or possibilities which he does not wish to use. There is some question as to whether and how a two-day old foetus should and must be regarded as a human life and we could produce evidence and opinion to that effect. But that would not prove the point. What we want to observe is that Barth quite willingly uses a scientific source to support the claim that a life is being taken (see Strasser, etc.); but presumably he would not permit or accept contrary information to decide an issue which is determined not outside of embryology but within it.

Also, Barth, even if he were correct there, has not satisfactorily examined the psychological and social factors which are involved within the decision. He does include the sociological and personal consideration of the mother's life or of the child's. But he does not enlarge his vision to include other considerations and alternatives. He refers at one point to the possibility of abortion where "the life and health of the mother is at

stake"; but it is uncertain whether Barth intends the statement to be expanded beyond physical life and death. The German sentence at this point reads "das Leben des Ungeborenen und das Leben bzw. das gesunde Leben der Mutter."[326] It sheds no clearer light. "das gesunde" merely translates from the root gesund, which means "sound, healthy, well, wholesome." Is it not possible that Barth intended it to mean the good health, mental and emotional, as well as physical?

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[326]Karl Barth, Die Kirchliche Dogmatik, Dritter Band "Die Lehre Von Der Schöpfung, Vierter Teil. Evangelischer Verlag (Zurich: A. G. Zollikin, 1957), pp. 480-81

f. Homosexuality

It is significant that Barth deals with the subject. Moralists such as Brunner, Søe, Trillhaus, etc., do not. He defines homosexuality as "a physical, psychological and social sickness." It is "a phenomenon of perversion, decadence and decay which can emerge when man refuses to admit the validity of the divine command."[327] We can hope, continues Barth, that those attempting to help the homosexual will put forth their best efforts (as they would to any sinner) in awareness that the God who commands also is a God of forgiving grace. But the decisive word of Christian ethics, relying on the divine command which declares that homosexuality is a perversion, "must consist in a warning against entering upon the whole way of life which can only end in the tragedy of concrete homosexuality."

"Relying on the divine command" is the most troublesome phrase in Barth's approach. It is here that Barth's assumption that all homosexuality is perverse, becomes elevated to the status of God's direct Word. The command, says Barth, shows the homosexual "that as a man he can only be genuinely human with woman." If he accepts this insight, "homosexuality can have no place in his life."

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[327] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 4, p. 166

It seems to us that Barth is mistaken. But that is not the major objection. What has happened is that he has taken an opinion regarding the repugnance which the Christian tradition has had towards the homosexual, a repugnance which could ultimately be traced to a misreading of the passage in scripture Genesis 19:4-11, and transferred that feeling to the command. Barth says that God says homosexuality is a "physical, psychological and social sickness, and a phenomenon of perversion, decadence and decay." It is against the life for which man was created.

But is it? In order to answer that question, one needs to have the kind of data concerning what is normal for the man as he was created. The kind of helpful material: historical and speculative, which appears, e.g., in D. S. Bailey's Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition. Bailey maintains that the Christian abhorence to homosexuality begins with a false reading of the passage in Genesis 19, especially at verse 5: "Where are the men that came into thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them." The assumption of early writers, and the assumption of the present day with many, is that the incident and the ensuing catastrophe of Sodom and Gommoreh for their sins, refers to homosexuality. Later in the book Bailey dismisses the incident completely from any homosexual meaning.[328] He exegetes the Hebrew verb (yādha) "to know," and refers to its original non-coital meaning, which would "be equally consistent with the text

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[328] D. S. Bailey, Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1955), p. 155

and spirit of the narrative." St. Paul denounces homosexual practices in Romans 1:26-27, but Bailey examines that denunciation hermeneutically and suggests that even Paul was not censuring "all homosexuality."[329] Bailey is cautious, and concludes with the comment that "it cannot be fully explained until we understand more than we do at present about the psychological factors which help to determine our social attitudes, but the historical study of sexual ideas throws some light upon the problems."[330] Bailey's contribution at that point, whatever one must decide regarding his conclusions, is essential: the historical study does shed some light without which our conclusions are not applicable. Bailey lists several points by way of summary, two of which concern us here: (1) the Christian tradition is "defective in that it is ignorant of inversion as a condition due to biological, psychological or genetical causes; and consequently of the distinction between the invert and the pervert. (2) The tradition is also defective because "it is by no means entirely a tradition founded and built upon reason, for it has been strongly influenced by emotional and psychological factors into which enquiry needs to be made."[331]

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[329] Ibid., p. 157

[330] Ibid., p. 161

[331] D. S. Bailey, Homosexuality and Western Christian Tradition, p. 173

Thielicke is more to the theological point in The Ethics of Sex. "Doctrinaire prejudices" he writes, "which distort the theological problem presented by homosexuality, manifest themselves also in the fact of the value judgment: 'homosexuality is sinful'."[332] The theologian who chooses to make such judgments, says Thielicke, "must look at another side of the matter and dare not defame the humanum of the person so conditioned in order to make his negation easier."[333] And finally,

> This inability to deal with the phenomenon which is conditioned by theological or psychic aversion so it can lead even such a prominent thinker as Karl Barth into such an astonishing confusion of terminology that he is capable of putting such heterogeneous value judgments as "sickness," "perversion," "decadence and decay," on the same logical level . . . as a "refusal to recognize God and a failure to appreciate man, and this humanity without the fellow men.[334]

Barth gives the decisive word of Christian ethics as a warning against homosexuality. But what can the command against homosexuality mean to the invert who is constitutionally unable to enter into the fellow man relationship on the male-female encounter? What is that person to think of the command?

One needs first to investigate, from the vantage point of biology, and evolutionary biology in particular, what "natural inclinations" are involved; i.e., if one

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[332] Helmut Thielicke, The Ethics of Sex, translated by John W. Doberstein (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 270

[333] Ibid., p. 271

[334] Ibid., pp. 271-72

chooses to speak of natural inclinations as all. And there Professor W. H. Thorpe writes:

> First, one can say without any fear of contradiction that there is not one iota of biological or psychological evidence to warrant the labelling of homosexuality as "unnatural" in the young. On the contrary, it seems to be natural right through primitive society. . . . Permanent adult homosexual partnerships are known in creatures as far apart as geese, porpoises, monkeys, elephants, and giraffes.[335]

As they are in man. "I may be wrong," writes Thorpe further, "but I cannot conceive a situation - nature being what it is - in which the structure and stability of society would be shaken let alone gravely threatened by homosexuality."[336]

Barth would not have responded affirmatively to the suggestion that we must judge homosexuality in the light of the social, personal, and cultural settings of the individual involved. The command says otherwise, and no reasoning outside the command, can be influential. But however "unnatural" it might appear, and however must again the created order as Barth imagines it, however much it can be perverse and a sign of decay; it belongs to that order of things which can and must be viewed in their natural setting, and in that regard, Barth is surely wrong.

Others, of equal devotion to God and His Word, disagree: "I cannot see that the fact that one loves a person of the same sex," writes Dr. Norman Pittenger, "and wishes

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[335] Thorpe, Science, Man and Morals, p. 128

[336] Ibid., p. 127

to act upon that love, is in and of itself sinful."[337]

When Pittenger wrote that comment, homosexuality and its expression were against the law, and consequently "crimes." But, if the laws were to be changed, would it still be a sin, as it would be with Barth? Sin, to Pittenger, is that fact which violates the mutuality of expression between two persons, is that relationship in which no concern is given. Consequently, homosexuality, in and of itself, need not be sinful.

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[337] Pittenger, W.N., New Christian, March 9, 1967, p. 9.

5. Summary and Critique

Now at the end of this long and laborious enquiry into the ways in which our thesis is concerned with the ethics of Karl Barth, let us draw together a few conclusions that should reflect the usefulness of the study and justify the effort involved. We can be brief, for almost all of what needs to be written has already been set forth in the preceding pages. Some procedural type problems and basic theological differences have been given special consideration in the early sections of this chapter. Our conclusions regarding the basic approach to man and Barth's attitude to ethics are amply recorded in those pages. The way in which Barth often escapes from the matrix of those initial problems is also mentioned there. It remains for us to delineate the resulting strengths and weaknesses in his ethical thought and therein to determine the kind of assistance which Barth can offer to the contemporary student of morals.

For our purposes here in this thesis: the strengths of Barth's ethical position are as follows: The first is Barth's pre-eminent contribution in demanding that we maintain a theological frame of reference throughout our ethical deliberations. "For us," he once wrote, "the urgent ethical

questions are reduced to one: how we may be impartial to the truth of the creator!"[338] Barth comes plunging down into "the lowlands of human history" but he brings the command of God along. How empty of content and assistance is the ethics which ignores or is uncertain about the God who has created and who cares. Barth wrote almost 40 years ago that:

> There was once a Schleiermacher, a Rothe, a Troeltsch who hardly knew what to do to take care of the profusion and variety of the facts of life. They felt they must be impartial at all costs to the whole of creation and to every creature; and they became so generously impartial, that Christianity, having no special privileges with them, found itself the unhappy victim of a housing shortage.[339]

We have enumerated some limitations in the "partiality" which Barth offers in return; but without entering the arguments between Barth and the nineteenth century liberals, this thesis accepts the principle that unless a Christian ethic is concerned to work out the implications of the Word of God for theological ethics, somehow framing the ethical event with the ways of God with men, it has sacrificed its essential contribution to ethical deliberation, and it should become a victim of another kind of housing shortage in contemporary ethics. As Robert McAfee Brown has written regarding Barth and the American theologians:

> Americans parroting a Barthian line would only be parodying it. The most Barth can do is to force

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[338] Barth, Word of God, Word of Man, p. 148

[339] Ibid., p. 148

> Americans to do what he himself has always done - to listen afresh to Scripture in the life of the church, not to reinforce a Barthian theology, but to see how and in what ways the Word of God is speaking a fresh, challenging, upsetting and yet ultimately renewing word to the church, and thereby to the world.[340]

That task, seen in conjunction with a cooperative ethic, we accept as belonging to the Christian moralist.

Secondly, from the positive point of view, we want to emphasize Barth's understanding of the need of man. Barth knows sin and error, but he teaches first the forgiveness and the love of God. After all, as Berkhouwer says, "Grace does triumph in the theology of Karl Barth."[341] Grace does triumph over the radical view of man's sin which in every way is prone to evil. Man by himself is totally sinful and hopeless, but man, even the worst man, is never by himself in Barth's theology.

> Real man, man himself, is the being reflected in the Grace of God addressed to man in Jesus Christ. This being is indeed a sinner, a pardonned sinner, and a child of God in hope. But this being does not start with the sinner. It is also a creature of God, participating as such in a definite structure, and knowable in this structure in the Word of God.[342]

He is already forgiven before he knows it; already healed before he is sick; already new before he seeks newness. In one of the most compassionate and reassuring passages of the whole Dogmatics, Barth writes as the conclusion of the

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[340] Casalis, Portrait of Barth, translated by Brown, pp. 2-3

[341] See G. C. Berkhouwer, The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956)

[342] Barth, Dogmatics, vol. 3, part 4, p. 44

section on Man and Woman:

> Thus even where man does not keep the command, the command keeps man. And the fact that it does so, and does so more powerfully than man himself is willing to admit . . . He who here commands does not only judge and forgive; He also helps and heals.[343]

This thesis reiterates all that is implied in the statement, counteracting some of the traditional "preachments" of which Christian ethics is so frequently guilty.

Finally, from the affirmative, we note that Barth is concerned with the wide range of ethical problems and situations which face modern man. He does place a heavy emphasis on the ethics of Sabbath observance, and Prayers of Confession, but he also comes directly into contact with the more earthy topics of abortion, birth control, suicide, war, poverty, sex relations in and out of marriage, etc. Throughout, he implies that the Command of the Doctrine of God, or better God Himself, is concerned with these ethical situations too. As Gustafson noted earlier, no modern theologian so completely adapts his theological interests to the ethical conditions of man. One could hold that Barth's answers are inadequate, or even wrong, but the charge that they are irrelevant is made only by those who have never met the Karl Barth of Dogmatics III, part 4. Barth in many cases is quite flexible and the range of his interest is extensive.

We noted already the curious paradox within Barth's

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[343] Ibid., p. 240

epistemology and ethics; where on the one hand he allows for no source of truth outside of the command, in theory; and on the other, that he introduces information gathered from the sources around him. First he writes:

> Grace which has from the start to share its power with a force of nature is no longer grace, i.e., it cannot be recognized as what the grace of God is in the consideration and conception of that divine act, as what it is in Jesus Christ. And therefore revelation which has from the very outset a partner in the reason of the creature, and which cannot be revelation without its cooperation, is no longer revelation.[344]

Then juxtaposed against that, is:

> Even the understanding of man from the Word of God will always be effected in practice in the language, categories and framework of the possibilities of human self-understanding. In it we shall always and inevitably have before us the phenomena of the human, and to that extent make use of the naturalistic, idealistic, existential, historical, psychological and similar thoughts and expressions.[345]

According to Barth, the "Real Man" is never found in these "possibilities of human self-understanding," far less should the ethical situation be influenced by them. Either way, Barth does touch upon them throughout his ethics. And, while his theory does not allow them, he manages to bring their insights to bear on the topic.

It would not have concerned Barth if we should have noted a non-rational source to his ethical reflections. The command itself is non-rational in the literal sense. But take, for example, Barth's treatment of the subject

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[344] Ibid., vol. 2, part 2, p. 531

[345] Ibid., vol. 3, part 4, p. 44

of euthanasia, or more specifically "the elimination of the incurably infirmed, the insane, the deformed." Throughout his section on The Respect for Life, there is always an exception to the prohibition of the command against taking a life. It is always implied that the command can over-rule whatever reasoning or reckoning the individual can bring to the situation. But, when Barth comes to the topic of taking the life of those whom society declares to be "unfit," there is no exception whatever. The command cannot, we suppose is what Barth meant, over-rule this absolute negative: "The question whether human society has the right to extinguish the life of such people is to be answered by an unequivocal No."[346]

We cannot possibly isolate this topic from the Europe Barth knew during the Third Reich and the atrocities under Hitler; where in fact the problem first arose for him. Hitler was exterminating the unfit to create his pure race. Barth responded that it was "murder"; and that both the taking of those lives, as well as the more usual euthanasia problem in the case of an incurably ill hospital patient, "cannot possibly be justified before the command of God." "Tyrannicide" was earlier exempted from the negative list, and in a significant reference to the plot in which Bonhoeffer participated, Barth seems willing to justify it (although not so completely that one has to wonder about

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[346] Ibid., p. 423

what he really means regarding Bonhoeffer), and writes that if those men who planned to murder Hitler had been more courageous and had been willing to offer their life in exchange for his, it might have succeeded.[347] As it was, perhaps they lacked courage or perhaps there was no actual command.

The case in point is mentioned not because it is so remarkably insightful, or novel. Many ethicists would draw the same two conclusions in the two situations of assassination and euthanasia. It is used to support the attachment which Barth and the command have to the culture and ethos which he knew. The problems arose within the Europe he knew, and his suggested reflection and instruction of the event are surely the result of what he saw and felt about the atrocities of Hitler and the Third Reich. The alternative would be for Dr. Barth to say that the command is always communicated through the cultural and personal and political and social millieu in which the recipient lives; and that he could never do.

Yet our larger point here is the affirmative mention of Barth's relevance to the actual, real society and ethical situations which men have to face. Whatever the outcome of the how and why of his ethical instruction, we can complete this reference with the point already made: Barth's ethic seeks a relevance to the actual moral problems of the time.

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[347] Most references to III, 4, circa 425

Professor N. H. G. Robinson once noted that "Barth is a great teacher from whom every Christian thinker has much to learn," but, Robinson continued, "a man can stay too long at school."[348] It will have been obvious throughout that we have attempted to leave the schoolroom with the best that he can offer, without staying so long that we lose a perspective on the weaknesses in Dr. Barth's ethics.

The difficulties which are inherent in the ethical approach of Barth have been mentioned directly and indirectly throughout this chapter. They come together here in two significant categories:

(1) Ultimately, Barth fails the apologetic task with which we have charged the ethicist in our time. We would set Tillich against Barth at this point and use the former as representative of the task. "Apologetics," Tillich explained, is "answering theology"; "It answers the questions implied in the 'situation' in the power of the eternal message and with the means provided by the situation whose questions it answers."[349] It presumes that there is something in common with these outside the theological circle. If Barth was unwilling to risk that integral and primal contact with outside sources of knowledge, because others (notably of the liberal period) succumbed to the risk, then we conclude that it is a failure of Barth

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[348] Robinson, Faith and Duty, p. 21

[349] Tillich, Systematic Theology, vol. 1, p. 6

and not the risk itself.

> Theology moves back and forth between two poles, the eternal truth of its foundation and the temporal situation in which the eternal truth must be received. Not many theological systems have been able to balance these two demands perfectly.[350]

(2) The second category of weakness in Barth's ethic is that if we followed him in guarding the right to say the first and last words regarding man, we would exempt ourselves from the inter-disciplinary investigations into ethical problems, and fail to understand the nature and necessities of the man in the ethical event. Intercommunication and apologetics, as ends in themselves, are only part of the obligation. The other part is to determine that we have found the man who actually "is," not the one we expect to see from criteria outside of the man who is discovered, and uncovered, in an enquiry into the natural history of man and the behavioural mechanisms which are adjuncts of that history. Barth's command, admitted by Barth himself, does not have to coincide with that man which is observed elsewhere in the natural process. Alternatively, if God is the author of truth, author of the truth of man and nature and ethics, then the man which we find in the natural world is part of the truth which God has given, as will be his nature and his ethics.

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[350] Ibid., p. 3

BISHOP F. R. BARRY

C. Bishop F. R. Barry

1. Introduction

One great theme has dominated the life and thought of Bishop F. R. Barry. It is a theme that has worked its way into most of his books and articles, from the first book he published early in World War I, until his most recent publication in 1969, which reached the public just before his eightieth birthday. The theme is his individual response to a theological crisis of our modern world; a crisis that in one way or another has to do with the isolation and eventual alienation of the contemporary culture and the Christian faith, an isolation and alienation for which both interests suffer debilitating consequences. Barry's response to that problem is the attempt to restore Christianity to its former prominent place, originator and protector of the best in Western civilization. Throughout that half-century Barry has lamented the decline and falling of Western life, and with it the near-collapse of Christian morality. "The crises of Christianity today," he recently wrote, "and the moral confusion of the West may both be said to result from the isolation of the Christian faith from the contemporary culture."[351]

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[351] F. R. Barry, Christian Ethics and Secular Society (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1966), p. 70

> There is a radical rift in the modern mind. The deep unconscious hungers of the psyche are starved or suppressed and find no satisfaction in a rational, intellectualized culture - that is what men mean when they talk about "alienation" from the life of the twentieth century society. . . . It could yet lead to . . . the breakdown of Western civilization.[352]

Walter Lippmann's A Preface to Morals, a book which must be seen in a special relationship to Barry's The Relevance of Christianity,[353] was also written for those who no longer believed in the religion of their fathers, and for "those who feel that there is a vacancy in their lives."[354] Lippmann's concern for moralistic humanism is not enough for Barry, but there is a kinship in aim as well as solution. Barry's theme is rather the rediscovery of the truth and relevance of the Christian message about God and man.

Some corollaries to this central concern arise out of his overwhelming belief that it is in Christian ethics first of all that this restoration can begin. The real test of the relevance of Christianity "will be in what it has to say about ethics." The key to renewing the Christian witness is to renew the importance and the application of the Christian ethic. Barry's contemporary Charles Gore once defined the greatest need of Christian theology as

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[352] Ibid., p. 28

[353] Early in Barry's book we find references to Lippmann's, even in the choice of a borrowed chapter subheading, "The Acids of Modernity"; but also see pp. 15, 17, 113, 121, 127, 129, 213, etc.

[354] Walter Lippman, A Preface to Morals (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1929), p. 3

being "a comprehensive work on Christian ethics"; one which would lay its basis:

> in a just historical estimate of what the ethical teaching of Jesus really meant and of its development in the New Testament, and in the history of the church; it must justify itself philosophically, scientifically, psychologically: finally it must give an elaborate account of human life, as it should be according to the standard of Christ.[355]

In a most unpretentious and readable way, Bishop Barry has undertaken to answer that need.

A large part of the problem with the failure of Christian ethics, and consequently of the failure of Christianity itself, has been the irrelevant posture of the ethical thought and counsel of the Christian moralists. As we will note, Barry makes reference several times to the way in which "old men" usually unmarried, lay down the rules and responsibilities for young people, men and women; old men who do not necessarily know what is going on in the world, and who have made no attempt to apply the continuing principles of the Christian ethic to the changing situations of modern life, or at best have done it reluctantly, following the many other leaders of our time. As another contemporary Dean W. R. Inge once said, the problem with Christian morals is that they are devised by persons "who fancy themselves attracted to God when they are really only repelled by man."[356]

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[355] Charles Gore, Christ and Society (New York: Charles Scribner, 1928), p. 194

[356] Quoted by Walter Lippmann, Preface to Morals, p. 314

But the irrelevance goes deeper than that. Barry is also concerned about the inability or the unwillingness of those who conduct the ethical enterprise, to seek a relatedness to the accumulating scientific information regarding man and his behaviour, which concerns the Christian ethic. The Christian must recognize that all attempts to find ethical truth and guidance for our world are valid and allied with the Christian effort, "even though they may seem to give anti-religious answers." "All along the line we must reach new understandings of what Christian morality means now, in a setting so radically different from anything forseen by our Christian ancestors."[357] The first variation on his theme is irrelevance.

The second variation of the theme is Barry's caution that while the Christian ethic seeks to be relevant, it is yet an ethic which remains Christian. It must be true to the basic principles which arise out of Biblical, ecclesiastical, and theological study. If it is to be effective in providing moral leadership to modern man, it must reflect upon the Christian theology from which it comes, and by which strength it continues to live.

> The Christian ethic derives from the Christian worldview, from those beliefs about God and man which constitute the Christian religion; and if the ultimate Christian beliefs are false - or to put it bluntly, if Jesus Christ was wrong - then clearly the whole case for Christian ethics . . . falls to the ground. In this sense it is hardly disputable that Christian ethics depends on Christian theology.[358]

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[357] Barry, Christian Ethics, p. 27

[358] Ibid., p. 34

There is no apology intended when we explain that F. R. Barry was included in this thesis for the practical application which he makes of the information of this research, rather than for his over-all theological importance in this century. Barry is an interpreter and communicator of the scholarly information, a role which is compatible with the intent of this thesis. Barry's concern is for the person who takes Christianity seriously, students of the faith rather than formulators of its theology. Bishop Barry offers direct assistance in a way that is both helpful and understandable. One of his recent books, e.g., was written "to help the ordinary Christian to find his bearings in all the confusion of our world."[359]

This is not to imply that Barry lacks the depth of scholarship. It is only to say that his function has been one of conveying the information to those inside and outside the Christian faith of what we are about. That is an essential function in the church, and one which Barry fills with success.

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The early nineteen-thirties were productive years indeed for books about Christian ethics. It was a period when Barry himself published his most notable book, The

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[359] Barry, Secular and Supernatural (London: SCM Press, 1969), p. 10

Relevance of Christianity.[360] We have already mentioned Lippmann's Preface to Morals. Add to those the early work of Reinhold Niebuhr, Moral Man and Immoral Society (1932), and Interpretation of Christian Ethics (1935); add Barth's Word of God and Word of Man, Brunner's The Divine Imperative, and Hartmann's Ethics; as well as Bergson's Les Deux sources de la morale et de la religion - all within a few years. In Great Britain itself Dean Inge's Christian Ethics and Modern Problems; Kenneth Kirk's Vision of God and The Threshold of Ethics; Gore's Gifford Lectures (The Philosophy of the Good Life), and Christian Moral Principles; Professor Taylor's Gifford Series The Faith of a Moralist; Temple's Christianity and the Present Moral Unrest; Streeter's Moral Adventure; Dewer's Man And God, and H. H. Henson's Christian Morality (also Gifford Lectures); as well as M. D'arcy's Christian Morals and H. Davis' classic Moral and Pastoral Theology. Tack on the continued efforts of Freud and Jung, Whitehead and Lord Russell; Hartshorne and Dewey, Haverlock Ellis and Edward Westermarck; and it was a prolific time indeed for information related to the Christian ethic.

It will be the general contention of this chapter that Barry has fulfilled the obligations of the Christian

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[360] Barry, Relevance of Christianity (London: Nisbet and Co., 1931); published in the United States as Christianity and the New World (with slight alterations) (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932)

moralist, both in the world of the 1930's and in the years since.[361] He has maintained an honest interest and application of the type of material which we deem essential for Christian ethics. He has emphasized the fact of human existence, but has not violated the uniquely Christian conception of man. In fact, we will later note that one of his greatest contributions is the balance he achieves in that area.

Through Barry we can trace some of the development of ethical positions on matters related to our topic. For the most part he has, as Dean Inge noted, a certain kind of "courage, open-mindedness, and ability." Barry

> recognizes the "realism and sincerity" with which the young approach all moral problems, as well as the danger of "secularizing" Christian ethics so as to

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[361] Barry has been a prodigious writer indeed. He has written two dozen books from the first: The War and Christian Ethics (London: Blackwell) in 1914, to Secular and Supernatural (London: SCM Press) in 1969. He has contributed to other books as a significant author, e.g., P. Dearmer's Christianity and the Crisis (London: Victor Gollanz, 1933), Barry's article entitled "The Church in the World - Failures and Opportunities"; and W. R. Matthews' The Christian Faith: Essays in Explanation and Defense (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1936), Barry's article "The Christian Way of Life." Barry was at the first a New Testament scholar (lecturer at Oriel 1913 to 1919) and he published a still fascinating study of Ephesians, St. Paul and Social Psychology (Oxford Press, 1923) and A Philosophy from Prison (1931). But it was the relevance of Christian ethics which dominated his scholarly and ecclesiastical interests for the most part from One Clear Call (London: W. Heffer and Co., 1922) to Secular and Supernatural (1969). His two major books on ethics and Christian morals are The Relevance of Christianity (1931) and Christian Ethics and Secular Society (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1966). He also contributed regularly to the Spectator, and occasionally to others such as the Church Quarterly Review. The listing of Barry's books

make them chime with the rhythm of the world.[362]

"On most subjects," Inge continued, "I am glad to find this book Relevance of Christianity in close agreement with my own," and especially on the subjects of "the need of discipline, the significance and supreme importance of the Galilean ministry for the foundation of Christian morality, and for a drastic simplification of life."

In introducing Barry's importance for this thesis we will use the following four subjects: (1) the first is the Relevance of his Ethics. (2) The second will detail his understanding of the Christian theology which underlies the moral counsel. (3) Thirdly, we will discuss Barry's understanding of the nature of man, and maintain that his ethic is responsive to the needs of men; and last (4) we will note the way in which he handles certain moral topics or "special ethics."

The approach which Barry takes to ethics could serve the church well in its moral deliberations. What he wrote in 1930 is true today:

> What is required is less demonstration that this or that behaviour is "wrong," than a constructive philosophy of life which candidly faces all the new factors which have entered into the moral situation to make it both more delicate and more complex, and offers genuinely positive leadership.[363]

It is the genuine positive leadership which Barry offers throughout the past half-century.

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and articles which we have used in this section appear in the Bibliography at the end of this thesis.

[362] W. R. Inge, Christian Ethics and Modern Problems (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930), pp. 6-7

[363] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 1

2. An Ethic that is Relevant:

The ethical concern of Bishop Barry, expressed over a span of forty years, is clearly set out in The Relevance of Christianity. It is: "To explore the presuppositions and the adequacy of the Christian way of life in the changed conditions of a changing world."[364] The balance which is so characteristic of his writing is noted at the start. The task of the Christian moralist is "to explore the presuppositions and the adequacy of the Christian way of life"; but it is always explored in "the changing conditions of a changing world." What must be shown is that the ideal of the Christian ethic is not only valid in theory, but also that it is actual and realistic in practice, "like the straight lines of our steel and concrete architecture." No ethic can survive and be helpful unless it is aware of, and responds to the conditions of the world in which it exists.[365]

The changed condition which Barry noticed in the 1920's and 1930's was one which appears to belong to our day too. "The most imperious challenge which today confronts Christianity," he write in the opening words of

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[364] Ibid., p. 10

[365] Barry, Spectator, January 19, 1934, vol. 152, p. 75

The Relevance of Christianity, "is the moral chaos of our generation."[366] While the Victorians had religious doubts and enjoyed their agnosticism, they had "no manner of doubt whatever" about morality. They were sure that they knew the moral answers, and the answers were rooted in the ethic of Christianity.

But, by the 1930's, that had radically changed. Barry wrote of the great areas of civilization, "such as economics and sexual relationships," for example, "which seem to have broken away from any reference to Christian or even to moral standards."[367] For the greater number of modern men and women it was no longer possible to refer to a single principle of Christian behaviour, and matters of ethics had been set free from the control and advice of the church. "The common attitude of our contemporaries is not so much that Christianity is untrue as that it is irrelevant."[368] "It sometimes seems as though material interests are the only allegiance to which the world of our time can offer itself in whole-hearted consecration."[369]

That was the changed condition. There was no doubt some hyperbole in Barry's estimate of the decline of Christian influence; but his question then, as now, was

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[366] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 1

[367] Ibid., p. 14

[368] Barry, Spectator, April 6, 1929, "The Christian Ethic," vol. 142, p. 530

[369] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 18

relevant:

> Is the Christian reading of man's life the true one? Are the moral standards of Christianity such that the modern conscience can endorse, or are they merely ethical traditions bound up with ways of thought and life which the lapse of time is fast making obsolete?[370]

In the change, however, Barry saw elements of the changing character of God's presence with men. And it was time for a change. The good old days had left residual errors in the attitude and approach to ethical problems.

> The predatory, exploiting type of character which carried the world to 1914 has now become a dangerous anachronism. It organized the social order (if order is a word that can be used of it) for the risks and adventures of competition. The new age needs something quite different. It needs to be organized for the risks and adventures of cooperation.[371]

The world had changed, and so must the Christian morals. The task of Christianity, wrote Barry, is to vindicate the moral validity and creativeness of the faith "when drawn to the scale of new maps, on the twentieth century projection of a ceaseless evolutionary process unfolding itself through the cosmic system."[372]

The failure in part had been a failure of the Christian Church to adapt itself. "The one really formidable argument against the truth of the Christian religion is the record of the Christian Church . . . again

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[370] Ibid., p. 5

[371] Barry, Spectator, January 26, 1934, vol. 152, p. 112

[372] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 2

and again it has taken the wrong side."[373] Rather than acknowledge the creative aspects of historical change, the church continued to view the movements of science and history as revolts against its authority and position; and the church called men to renewed obedience on standards of conduct which were no longer relevant or justified. The church had not only missed the fine qualities of realism and sincerity, which were also characteristic of the generation, but also had simply identified the Christian way of life with the social conventions of its predecessors. Therein said Barry, lay its modern predicament and its irrelevance. It had tried to meet the challenge of a changing world with a repetition of venerable formulas of a previous generation.

There is a contemporary extension of that concern in Christian Ethics and Secular Society:

> Ethics is sometimes called the cement of society. But a fluid society does not need cement, which must either restrict it or be cracked. What it needs is a permanent center of moral reference, not so much a map as a true compass - bearing as mankind moves out over uncharted seas to a still unpredictable destination.[374]

All moral decisions have to be made in an experimental manner. They are related to the particular situation and the materials actually at hand. They are informed by the knowledge of the principles:

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[373] Barry, The Relevance of the Church (London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1935; New York: Scribners, 1936), p. 46

[374] Barry, Christian Ethics and Secular Society, p. 14

> The basic Christian facts do not change; but Christian theological formulations have changed and are now changing rapidly in response to social and economic changes. So the Christian moral principles do not change, but new social and economic facts intervene to change the situation and thus require fresh interpretations of them.[375]

The Gospel of Christian Love bids us to care for the poor; but it does not give us the social techniques or the machinery or the institutions through which it will currently be best to express it. These depend on our knowledge of the economic and social facts available at the time.

In the end the real test of the relevance of Christianity will be what it has to say about ethics. It is in the sphere of morals that religious questions present themselves most acutely to men today. "And it is here that the churches and what they stand for are felt by many sincere minds to be failing them."[376] The question now is the same as it was then:

> Can Christianity still be the moral guide of our fast-changing Western society, in its moral confusion and spiritual bankruptcy? What, more precisely, is Christian morality and how far is it valid apart from Christian belief? What has it to offer to twentieth century man? . . .[377]

The one thing it can offer is a relevant Christian ethic. Professor Waddington once wrote that the primary demand of an ethical theory is that "it should be relevant and

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[375] Ibid., p. 32

[376] Ibid., p. 15

[377] Ibid., p. 13

applicable to the world around it."[378]

In the early nineteen-twenties, the case at hand was the "new" social psychology. Barry immersed himself in the psychological writing of the day, including notably McDougall and F. W. H. Myers, and wrote Christianity and Psychology,[379] as well as an introduction to the book of Ephesians: St. Paul and Social Psychology,[380] arguing in the latter that St. Paul was an apposite precursor of the best insights of the modern psychology. "If Christianity claims to be a faith and a life for man in society, it must come to terms with social psychology."[381]

The economic condition of the nineteen-thirties also prompted his interest and response in e.g., The Relevance of Christianity.[382] So deeply did he get to the root of the problems of the affluent society, that Dean Inge accused him of being overly socialistic for an Anglican author.[383] Barry's continuing relationship with humanism we will note later. And, his most recent works incorporated the watchwords of the new theology,

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[378] Waddington, The Ethical Animal, p. 20

[379] Barry, Christianity and Psychology (London: SCM Press, 1923)

[380] Barry, St. Paul and Social Psychology (London: Oxford University Press, 1923)

[381] Ibid., p. 44

[382] See Relevance of Christianity, pp. 284-99, etc.

[383] Inge, Christian Ethics, Modern Problems, p. 7

"religionless Christianity and man come of age" from Bonhoeffer; the death of God theology from the United States; the process theology of Whitehead and Hartshorne; and not least, for our purposes, the philosophical biology of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin.[384] He once wrote in the Spectator:

> The first condition of Christian revival is a brave and radical rethinking of the theology for which the church stands, in terms not of formula and definition, but of truth for twentieth-century life and action.[385]

Relevance itself is important, and with Barry it takes on a deeper significance. Not only does he keep in touch with the world around him, he is also willing to listen to and be led by others.

> There are technical factors involved in moral choices and if we are trying to find out what is God's will and verify our Christian obedience we must have recourse, on such matters, to the experts whether or not they believe in Christianity.[386]

Twentieth-century morality should learn from twentieth-century man, utilizing whatever information is available; "if God in Christ has entered history, then men must be able to find him in our history, not only in the first century or the thirteenth."[387] Underlying principles do not change,

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[384] See Secular and Supernatural, pp. 121, 126, etc.

[385] Barry, Spectator, "The Churches and the Common Life," vol. 160, p. 859, May 13, 1938

[386] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 31

[387] Barry, Secular and Supernatural, p. 33

> but new social and economic facts intervene to change the situation and thus require fresh interpretations of them. New social techniques become available; society comes to be organized in new patterns; new medical or psychological knowledge may affect the Christian judgement on various points. Christian moral principles do not change. . . .(But) when new facts change the moral context, they will change the actual content of obedience.[388]

Christian morality exists in a far larger world than its own theology and churches. It cannot be understood in isolation from the culture and the social situation around it; God did after all, love the world so much that he identified himself with it. Barry's relationship with the educated humanism of his day is a good case in point. In a most perceptive and illuminating paragraph, Barry wrote:

> That is the tragedy of the last three centuries. When the new knowledge flooded in, new desires were struggling for expression and a new power was put into man's hands to mould the order of nature to his will, the official church was found on the wrong side. It offered the modern world a false choice - between belief in God, as it understood Him, and what seemed to be belief in progress and the hopefulness and wonder of man's life.[389]

The relationship of Christian ethics with the world around it must be one of cooperation and mutual assistance.

> All of us, Christian and Humanists alike, are in the same predicament together. We are all alike being carried along by forces which nobody yet fully understands. . . . Christian faith in the Lordship of Christ does not imply that we know the Christian answer to the complex ethical issues of our time. There is no ready-made Christian ethic which can just be

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[388] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 32

[389] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 131

"applied" - as though it were paint or wall-paper.[390] But, instead of being "allies and collaborators," Barry wrote, the Christian moralist and the humanist have shouted at one another from entrenched positions; and Christians have been especially distrustful of any ethical or moral insights found outside the faith. While they should have been engaged in mutual conversation - in common defense of those human values which are in danger - each has refused to take the other seriously.

Barry seeks a cooperative approach with Humanism, but seeks also to transform the secular humanist. Barry is entirely open to learn and to listen; but he is also prepared to teach and to preach. For:

> Moral standards are not self-sustaining: they are vitalized and sustained by convictions that reach out beyond themselves, as the tree draws strength from the soil that nurtures it.[391]

To believe in man, we must believe in something more than man. To be relevant to the actual moral needs of the human situation, we must be related through the singular contributions of the Christian faith.

In The Recovery of Man, Barry made the point clear:

> The quarrel of Christianity with Humanism . . . is not that its claims for the spirit of man are too high, but that they are not high enough, because it leaves out the reality of God and the gift of eternal life by which man's values and status are conferred upon him.[392]

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[390] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 31

[391] Ibid., p. 26

[392] Barry, The Recovery of Man (London: Nisbet & Co., Ltd, 1948; New York: Scribners, 1949), p. 18

3. The Relevance of Christianity

During the nineteen-thirties, Barry taught that the reconstruction of the Christian ethic will arise out of a reconsideration and reapplication of the Christian faith. "Christian ethics depends on Christian theology." That situation of the thirties must be realized before we can grasp the significance of Barry's contribution. The question then, expressed specifically by Lord Russell, Sir Julian Huxley, Professor Irving Babbitt, etc., was whether modern civilization had to retain the tenets of Christian theology in order to retain Christian morality. The answer of that day was largely negative. Christian theology was part of an anachronistic way of looking at things, and the moral ideals which it developed did not depend on its other-worldliness. Barry responded with his book of The Relevance of Christianity, the purpose of which was "an attempt to state a conviction about the significance of Christ and the presentation of Christianity in its relevance to the claim and values of life."[393] "The prime consideration of entering the Kingdom is to share the standpoint of the King."[394] What Christianity

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[393] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. xi-xii

[394] Ibid., p. 8

has to say about ethics arises out of that world-view.

> If Christianity is ineffective in the moral leadership of this generation, the failure lies not in its lack of zeal but in the confusion of our thinking and the poverty of our vision of God. Christ is central in our moral universe only so far as we refuse to isolate Him from the context of our experience.[395]

In The Relevance of the Church Barry argued not only for relevance of the faith, but also for a relevance of the churches and the Church. The essential offering of the Church to the world is a regeneration of character. Life is not only a series of individual acts which take on significance in the immediate situation; life is a continuing effort to gain mastery over the environment in which it lives:

> An ethic which is merely conformed to the outward conditions of a culture, and those thought forms and behaviour-patterns which they impose on the bodies and souls of men is but an echo of life, not a guide to it.[396]

> If Jesus was wrong at the centre of His thinking, then the Christian ethic is a false ethic. But if He was right, . . . our civilization must "repent" before it can talk of "applying" Christianity. To be saved without being converted . . . is in the nature of Christian things impossible.[397]

The emphasis later shifted into the more contemporary issue over whether the church should be involved in society. Barry wrote:

> We must not assume that what "modern man" thinks is the final criterion of religious truth. The Church must take care that in trying to build a bridge across to the secularized modern world, it does not abandon the bridgehead

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[395] Ibid., p. 7

[396] Barry, Relevance of the Church, pp. 159-60

[397] Ibid., p. 160

> on the Christian side and find itself with nothing to communicate and nothing distinctively Christian to contribute.[398]

But, whether it is a thirty year old argument with Huxley, or with the radical critics of the nineteen-sixties, Barry applies the identical principle: in order to have a Christian ethic that is relevant to the human situation, you must first have an ethic which is related to Christian theology.

Our efforts to train people in the problems of moral perplexity are impeded and weakened by the sense that we do not understand with sufficient clarity what it is we are supposed to do.

> We cannot be effective in action, whether in pastoral work or in politics, 'til we know what it is we are trying to do. To clarify our vision of our objectives should not be without its help in attaining them.[399]

What Christianity is "trying to do," is a question of first importance.

From his background in the New Testament studies, Barry elaborates an answer in terms of the New Testament contribution and the Ethic of Jesus.[400] Together with his strong interest in the needs of contemporary society, Barry also insists that we must build our contemporary ethic on the Biblical foundation of the New Testament.[401]

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[398] Barry, Secular and Supernatural, p. 33

[399] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 21

[400] Ibid., see chapters 3 and 4

[401] Because of his special interests and preference, Barry chooses to ignore the Old Testament, a regrettable procedure criticized by Robert Davidson's "Some Aspects of the Old Testament Contribution to the Pattern of Christian Ethics" Scottish Journal of Theology 12: 373-387, 1959

His treatment of the New Testament background is an important variation in the study of Biblical approaches to ethical theory and practice.

> The moment Christianity loses touch with the inspiration of the New Testament, it tends to sink to a sub-Christian level, and its moral witness is weakened or obscured.[402]

But it is the inspiration of the New Testament which is the primary concern, and not the ethics of Jesus. If one goes to the Gospels to find material for a particular ethical system, one ends with a set of sermons and rules which Jesus applied to the first century situation in Palestine.

> Like the Christian religion itself, the New Testament is ethical through and through. Yet it is not a manual of Christian ethics. It may truly be said that its primary concern is not with ethics at all but with religion. The ethics flow out of the religion, as the religion expresses itself in ethics - the two are indissoluble and correlative. Yet without the religion there would be nothing.[403]

What Barry is proposing as the proper way to look at New Testament ethics is consistent with the continuing plea for relevance in other ages. The "inspiration" of the New Testament to Barry, is a matter of realizing that Jesus put God first, and then He spoke about ethical matters as it happened to occur to Him in the situation.

The Biblical record shows us the moral and spiritual achievement which Christ had in the lives of the men and women whom He met, and therein lies its strength. "It is not for deliberate or conscious argument for our guidance

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[402] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 40

[403] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 77

or conviction of posterity. It is written for men of its own time, in the forms of their thoughts and language, in terms of the immediate tasks and problems."[404]

> The Spirit would create a new ethic, which would be spontaneous rather than traditional, proving its moral and spiritual mastery over circumstances, as they arose. There is only one law, the law of love: its applications are infinite in number, as they are many faceted in variety.[405]

New Testament Christianity was involved with the world about it as it moved to the large centers of population in the ancient world, but in itself it was not a social movement. "About the great constructive tasks of citizenship and the gifts of faith to the so-called 'cultural values', it seems to have almost nothing to say."[406] And, though we can partially explain its indifference at this point by the belief in an imminent Parousia, and by the knowledge that most of its converts were not in influential positions in society, "none of these is satisfying," says Barry, and the reason must be sought at a far deeper level.

> This is the paradox of the whole New Testament. Never has there been a stronger emphasis on the ethical implication of religion. Yet its actual ethical directions appear to us to be almost obscurantist.[407]

The ethical teaching of the New Testament seldom goes beyond the field of personal and domestic conduct, "and it seems to

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[404] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 47

[405] Ibid., p. 50

[406] Ibid., p. 51

[407] Ibid., p. 55

have little concern with the larger questions of civic and social responsibility."

But, says Barry, the source of this weakness is also the source of its strength and the contribution to our modern ethical attitudes. It is not really interested in these problems.

> It is not a book about ethics but a book about the Christian religion. The New Testament is an other-wordly book: its primary concern is not with social duty: it is with sin, forgiveness and atonement, and the source of spiritual regeneration in the redemptive love of God the Father.[408]

The primary mission of the faith was not to elaborate a social gospel, but to proclaim the vision of God in Jesus Christ. "The other-worldliness of the early church is rather a massive concentration on the one thing which the world needed most."[409] It was the relevant expression of the Christian faith to ethics which was called for by the New Testament world.

That, says Barry, is its lasting contribution to ethical reflection. It calls us first to Christianity, then sends us away with the conviction that if we are grounded in the Christian faith, our ethics will bring the depth of insight to the problems. The church is not another group of interested people who are trying to solve ethical problems. It is a group of Christians who apply the faith of God in ethical situations. It calls first for a renewal

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[408] Ibid., pp. 55-56

[409] Ibid., p. 56

of life in the God who is revealed in Christ, and then ethical advice and action follows from there.

> It is not because it tells us how to behave in this or that particular situation that we invest it with eternal value; it is rather as the victorious expression of the innermost meaning of life intself, stripped of all its contingent circumstances.[410]

Other ethical approaches fail because of the narrow reading of human life which is circumscribed by temporal horizons. "Now it was seen against eternal backgrounds."

The moral creativeness of Christ Himself is this insight which He brought to bear on the existing materials.

> He (Christ) was not concerned with advice about conduct, but with the exposure of motive, penetrating the inner heart's secrets with the two-edged sword of inescapable insight . . . What matters is the integrity and the insight which inspire the judgment brought to bear on them.[411]

Hence the concern of Christian ethics is not so much to show that this or that behaviour is right or wrong, but to refer to a constructive philosophy of life which candidly faces all the new factors which have entered into the moral situation. Its essential offering to the moralization of the new age is the regeneration of character and the Christian understanding of man.

> The real question about Christian ethics is therefore to show how the Christian world view, centered upon faith in a living God and accordingly supernatural in its emphasis, can offer itself as the interpretation of our rich and manifold experience in an ever-widening and bewildering Universe.[412]

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[410] Ibid., p. 57

[411] Ibid., p. 75

[412] Ibid., p. 10

In a certain sense, says Barry, there is no Christian ethic at all. There are but Christian attitudes to experience. The Christian moral standard is, after all, not a code of conduct which has to be defended against the attacks of a forward generation. "It is an insight to be achieved."[413] It changes because it is intended to change. Its permanence rests on a faith in "the divine purpose which is operative in the history of the world and in the sharing of which man's life is fulfilled."[414] In this way it is related to the social problems and movements of the world about it.

> If the Spirit of Christ is the constructive spirit, in face of all that is decadent and destructive, then the business of the Christian ethic is to bring under social and moral control those yet unmoralized forces which are defeating the ends of civilization.[415]

For that in essence is what is meant by the church: to be the Body of Christ in the world - the society through which God is revealed in the social order. Its whole life will be organized by God's will for the human race, as declared and mediated by Christ Jesus. Christianity has a revolutionary dynamic power of social reconstruction and renewal. But, if it goes into the social and ethical situations without that essential strength, it becomes but another of the many inadequate attempts to redeem society and man.

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[413] Ibid., p. 8

[414] Barry, Christianity and Crisis (P. Dearmer, ed.), p. 588

[415] Barry, Spectator, January 26, 1934, p. 113

Barry's constructive work on the ethical foundations of Christianity was important in the 1920's and 1930's in light of the rapidly expanding "social gospel" movements which were in danger of losing the distinctively Christian aspects of its life. It is relevant in our day as well.

> Just insofar as the Church knows its business, its centre of gravity cannot be in this world, though it is in this world that its task is to be performed. Its mission is to bring the order of this world - with all its social and economic systems - into conformity with the divine ideal of it.[416]

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[416] Barry, "The Church in the World - Failures and Opportunities," in Christianity and Crisis, p. 591

4. Ethic Related to the Essential Needs of Man

Barry calls for an investigation of what Christian ethics should be in our time. An ethic that claims finality in the life of men must be integrally wove into the true patterns of human life; and must be responsive to the deepest needs of mankind. If it frustrates, ignores, or impoverishes any essential need of the human personality, it will be misleading to the moralist. The Christian ethic can never be safeguarded by rending the true texture of man's experience, as has been attempted in the many forms of a dualism between faith and knowledge; between reason and revelation; between existence and experience.

The difficulty with the Barthian ethic is that the will of God is known to us only in and through revelation. "But if religion is thus drawn apart from life it becomes itself impoverished and anaemic."[417] Barth, says Barry, desires to establish a distinction "between the faith by which God is apprehended and all the other activities of our spirits."

The difficulty, says Barry, is more than a matter of method: it concerns the being and nature of God. "The

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[417] Barry, Relevance of Church, p. 111

power of God," writes Barth, "can be detected neither in the world of nature nor in the souls of men."[418] But "if God is in no sense revealed in the glory and majesty of the world and the plain goodness of commen men and women . . . then Christianity is a mistake and God is not at work in the world in any sense as the Gospel claims."[419]

It is not just a theological squabble with Dr. Barth. It is more a reflection of two different ways of looking at the world of nature and the Christian ethic itself.

> It cannot hope to redeem the surrounding world so long as other-worldliness is interpreted as aloofness from the world's affairs. If religion stands, as it stands at present, self-contained in its own preoccupations over against the values and interests of the world which it is commissioned to save, it will lose both the world and its own soul.[420]

Christian morality must be able to grow as human experience and human knowledge grow. It must respond to man's fundamental selfhood.

> This means that it must be set forth in the context of a satisfying and coherent world-view. For the question: what is the right kind of conduct plainly presupposes another: How can we interpret the universe and Man's place and destiny within it?[421]

Barry's interpretation is one which we will again note is characterized by the balanced view he maintains regarding the natural and supernatural elements in the existence of man.

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[418] Ibid., p. 112

[419] Ibid.

[420] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 19

[421] Ibid., p. 3

The main points in his argument were formulated in Christianity and Psychology,[422] published in 1923. Already Barry had understood the essential task which the scientist has in assisting the Christian moralist. Some of the details of the analysis must be altered in the light of knowledge we now have, but the principles laid down in that book still apply. Barry's own summary of the concern of the book is useful:

> Psychology must supply us with the facts about the human mind and its experiences, of which the religious experience is one. It is then the task of theology to explain what kind of universe it is in which such experiences occur . . .[423]

Psychology supplies us with the facts. Before we can decide what to do with them or how they bear on a theological understanding of the nature of man, we must first know what the discoveries are. The facts themselves do not give us a system of value, nor a detailed list of good ethical practice, but neither can we do without them.

This is an important point in Barry's scientific investigations, as well as our own. Later he referred to the long-held dogma of moral philosophy "that there is no passage from is to ought."[424] Indicative statements cannot be transferred directly into imperative ones. Barry's own

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[422] Barry is using psychology in its broadest sense, which is a social psychology that deals with the study of man. It actually belongs to our general use of the categories of The Life Sciences, rather than to psychoanalysis or psycho-therapy.

[423] Barry, Christianity and Psychology, p. 172

[424] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 48

discussion of evolutionary ethics, which we will discuss later, makes that point quite clearly. While it is true that there is no passage from is to ought, Barry implies that this is not the emphasis which the Christian moralist is likely to need. The latter's preoccupation with the theological source of value demands that he be concerned with the ought. It is the "is" which is likely to be overlooked, or to be relegated to a secondary position. Barry's concern is rather to show that "any theory of what ought to be, and therefore any moral judgments, must in the long run be firmly grounded in the way man is made, and the way the world is made."[425]

Early in his writing Barry was emphasizing that "the starting point of our whole enquiry must be the wholehearted recognition of the hypothesis of 'evolution' in the sphere of mental and spiritual life."[426] "Not our bodies only, but our minds as well are continuous with those of our animal ancestors, and we forget or deny them to our peril."[427] There is no activity of human life which can be examined independently from its origin in the evolutionary process. Everything that man is or does, wrote Barry, is affected by his natural origin.

> Man's self-conscious reason rests on a biological foundation. It is built over animal appetites, and

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[425] Ibid.

[426] Barry, Christianity and Psychology, p. 9

[427] Ibid., p. 9

> surrounded with non-rational processes. It carries with it traces of its ancestry.[428]

The general conclusion, we think, is correct; and the intention is aligned with Barry's relevance elsewhere. He tries to understand ethical and spiritual behaviour as they are related to their natural setting. He also emphasizes that the natural inclinations of man cannot be called "sinful," for then it would have to be assumed that "self- destruction must be the Will of God."

Barry never did face directly the question of the origin of those attributes which we label sinful, the question which dominated the ethical concern of F. R. Tennant; i.e., how sin originates in the natural process. With Barry, as with Tennant, the native impulses and instincts are morally neutral. He is determined however, only to conclude that sin is "man's melancholy privilege, not a hangover from sub-human ancestry."[429] He dismisses the Genesis narrative from serious consideration as "having played little part in later Biblical thought, and it is never referred to in the Gospels."[430] "The core of the Gospel is the goodness of God and grace abounding to the chief of sinners." The myth of Adam and Eve is useful only that it lays stress on the disobedience of man himself. "Only a child of God can commit sin"; for while an animal

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[428] Ibid., p. 10

[429] Barry, Recovery of Man, p. 67

[430] Ibid., p. 68

can perform an act that is an incorrect choice, from our point of view, only a human spirit can perform an act with ethical significance.

> Thus it is, by a resounding moral paradox, that the very fact of man's fallen state - his shame, his treachery, and his humiliation, is evidence of his divine origin and therefore contains the pledge of his restoration.[431]

Barry does believe that "morality" comes naturally to man, in a process similar to the "social heredity" we mentioned earlier with Tennant. The "natural" is admittedly an ambiguous word, but Barry means only to say that morality comes naturally to man in his social setting. He asserts that all societies have moral codes which demand to be followed by the constituency of the group, or retribution is required. More recently, in Secular and Supernatural, he states that: "All cultures of which we have any knowledge have been based on a faith in God, or gods, and sustained by community myths and common worship."[432] At other points he includes a common ethic. Natural law and its conclusions can lead to complex discussions, but

> The permanent value of the concept is not so much in yielding a moral code as in its insistence that morality is natural to man. . . . It is primarily an account of the naturalness of morals.[433]

Barry's argument is really from a natural law, or from a social anthropological point of view, yet it is similar to

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[431] Ibid.

[432] Barry, Secular and Supernatural, p. 9

[433] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 46

that of Tennant, as well as having a similarity with C. H. Waddington's "socio-genetic transmission" of the ethical inclination. If there is something absolutely universal about the moral sense in all men everywhere, then it must in the end be attributed to more than an accident of history and cultural development.

There are times when Barry oversimplifies the specific ways in which the natural instincts of man operate in human behaviour. He was dependent on McDougall and the faculty psychology of the early decades of this century. With McDougall, he assumes a far too simple list of primary instincts, which operate directly in man. He writes, for example, of the "gregarious impulse, which after all is said and done, may be the dominant force in the lives of all of us." The "acquisitive instinct" is the root of our business interests. "A balked parental instinct transfers itself into acquisitiveness: the childless man becomes a miser." The "hunting instinct finds its outlet in collecting postage stamps. The fighting instinct of 'pugnacity' is transferred into the formation of 'martyrs and pioneers' in all branches of the Master's army."[434]

Barry's interest in these matters is to show that the self-conscious man is able to redirect his natural impulses into higher types of human activity: "They can be converted or sublimated; and their energy can be transferred

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[434] Barry, Christianity and Psychology, pp. 16 ff, etc.

along other instinctive channels."[435] With that we can also agree. But Barry's difficulty (and our disagreement) is that he has assumed a simple and direct relationship between instinct and human behaviour, and has missed the complexity of interaction in the genetically determined activity of man. And also, unintentionally, has overemphasized the purely biological nature of human ethical problems.

> If we trace things back to the start, we shall probably find that practically all the moral problems which we have to face, in ourselves or in other people, have one of the primary instincts at their root.[436]

That statement can only be true if we alter its emphasis to read: If we trace things back to the start we shall probably find that practically all moral problems we have to face . . . are in some way affected by the natural biological origin of man. Barry had gone too far; but the point of that early book was essentially praiseworthy. It put him directly into touch with the issues involved in a scientific investigation of human behaviour.

In later writings Barry himself has altered the specific emphasis. In Christian Ethics and Secular Society, written more than forty years later, he continues to stress that the Christian moralist must examine the scientific sources of human behaviour. The emphasis here, however, is on the more general aspects of the non-rational influences working in man. Using Niebuhr's words, he writes of the

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[435] Ibid., p. 21

[436] Ibid., p. 19

"limits of creatureliness which man cannot defy." "Every social decision is modified and circumscribed by natural circumstances and historical tendencies beyond the control of human decision."[437]

> As a product of biological evolution, man carries within him, physically and mentally, the indelible legacy of his pre-human origin. The oceanic tides of his earliest home still affect the rhythms of human physiology. His mental and emotional constitution has a long history behind it and never ignores or cuts itself loose from its "natural" and innate endowment.[438]

Moralists, says Barry, have been prone to underestimate "the extent to which life has to be lived and moral decisions made in a framework of events and processes which are beyond human control."[439] The first lesson we have to learn is that we do not enjoy a freehold - we must live by nature's conditions.

> . . . these apparently impersonal forces which appear to control and bedevil the situation, are but the accumulated consequences of incalculably many acts of choice by uncounted millions of human wills before us.[440]

Human character is largely constituted by what we know are non-rational factors in our ethical decisions from our study of biology and genetics.[441] If we emphasize reason or revelation in that which makes us men, we tend to ignore

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[437] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 61

[438] Ibid.

[439] Ibid., p. 60

[440] Barry, Questioning Faith (London: SCM Press, 1965), p. 124

[441] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 60

or to minimize the non-rational factors in our make-up: emotions, instincts, and desires. Christian ethics must be realistic in its understanding of the limits within which our freedom of choice is possible.[442] We must welcome the findings of the sciences and everything they may have to tell us about human behaviour.[443]

Barry's interest in incorporating the scientific facts of human behaviour has continued throughout his later writings. But the structure of his ethical attitudes is completed only when we examine the process by which he applies the information to the developing Christian ethic. We must welcome the findings of science, he says, "but we cannot rightly understand what they mean until we place them all into the larger context of man's existence in the universe."

As Canon Raven had noted earlier, we get further when we approach evolution from its end product rather than its beginning. The former is the procedure of Christian thinking, while the latter is that of contemporary Naturalism. Barry writes:

> For modern thinking, as for Aristotle, ethics is a branch of natural science: for the great Christian tradition it is a province of Theology. That at once defines its essential character.[444]

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[442] Barry, Questioning Faith, p. 124

[443] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 63

[444] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 138

Man is a part of nature, but he also transcends the natural process and is subject to the considerations of that realm as well. Central to the case for the Christian world-view is the awareness that "human rights . . . rest fundamentally on the faith that man is heir of a more than earthly destiny." The most certain fact in human experience is that man is aware of, and able to reflect upon himself and his own thoughts and purposes. "Not only does man transcend nature, still more importantly, he transcends himself."[445]

The belief in man's transcendence is essential. But there is a sense in which Bishop Barry implies that the awareness of this transcendence, and some specific descriptions of its presence in man; e.g., "the cause of human behaviour," are things which are outside the natural existence of man - as if they represent a wholly extra-natural endowment from the Creator. While formerly he had insisted that no aspect of human life, even its spiritual and moral action, is unaffected by the evolutionary origin and the biological nature of man, in this instance he appears to fall back on another kind of dualism.

He writes, for example:

> Human action steps forth out of nature into an order of self-determination, an order of personality or spirit, in which man lives not by compulsion from behind him, but by value and purpose summoning him to realize what he has it in him to become.[446]

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[445] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 64

[446] Ibid., p. 63

We will not argue that human action is bound to its evolutionary origin; but on Barry's own criteria of human nature, it is impossible that human action can step forth out of nature into an order in which man lives not by compulsion from behind but alone by value and purpose summoning him ahead. It is a difficult task to clarify the point without seeming to deny the transcendence of man. But the objection which we want to make is that Barry has been too timid in carrying his understanding of human nature to its logical conclusions; i.e., that while our understanding of the ethical value of man's behaviour may exist outside of nature, and that summons him on, human action itself does not. It seems rather that Barry should be saying that man can step out of a purely biologically determined behaviour into a uniquely human existence where he is able to reflect upon the meaning of his actions; but that human existence itself, and the ability to transcend it, are also affected by "natural" origins and expressions. Otherwise we are left with a belief in a partial natural origin of man, but with arbitrary exceptions which do not seem to be available to Barry unless he denies his previous point. Man is able to transcend his natural behavioural patterns and their limitations. It does seem correct to say that he does so by the values and purposes which summon him ahead. But even at these "highest levels" of human activity, he is still not "out of nature" nor freed from "natural compulsions."

More to the point of our criticism is another quotation from his book:

> Human action is caused by the human will and that is something altogether distinct from anything that exists in the natural order. Man's brain, his nervous system, his muscles, are the secondary causes of what is done. But the real cause or the first mover is not any of these, it is the Man himself, giving effect to a freely chosen purpose.[447]

Barry's confusion is all the more evident here. To write that human action is caused by a human will which is "something altogether distinct from anything that exists in the natural order," is to confuse the issue entirely and to reverse what Barry otherwise seems to believe. His use of "the human will" is part of the difficulty. The "will" to Barry, as in a similar way with Tennant, seems to mean that something exists in itself. But the will must certainly consist of all that the man is, and the man is all that he has become in the process of life. To separate it off as a separate endowment inevitably leads to the misunderstanding. Man's decision-making capacity (which presumably is what Barry means by the will) is available to him precisely because he has these natural endowments. It is subject to the requirements (or compulsions) which exist in its origin and expression. When Barry writes that "the first cause . . . is the Man himself," it seems to us that he is simply providing another way of saying "the human will." The will is the man, and the man is all these things which make him a man.

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[447] Ibid., p. 63

Barry has applied to the act itself a frame of reference which refers to the ethical value of the act. In Questioning Faith, he is referring to the subject of "evil" or "sin." Sin, he writes, "is a concept which concerns man's relationship to God and can only be formed in a religious context, not simply another word for doing wrong."[448] The source of evil is in the human will - in its deliberate choice against the will of God.

> The source of evil is not in "matter," in which case to be born would be damnation - nor in the ultimate rift or flaw in the universe, in which case it would be inherent in the nature of things and there could be no hope of overcoming it. The source of moral evil is in the will.[449]

There is an important difference between this and the previous passage. Here Barry's argument is directed to the understanding of a theological-ethical interpretation of the value of human behaviour. It is not, as before, "human action" itself which is involved. It is the value judgment which a Christian moralist is making on human action, and that is based on the criteria of that which transcends nature. While previously "the will" was interpreted to mean the decision-making capacity of man, now it is restricted to the origin of the religious concept of sin. We must conclude that in the latter instance Barry has made an important point regarding the source of evil from a theological point of view. That can only rightly

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[448] Barry, Questioning Faith, p. 138

[449] Ibid., p. 120

be done when we can establish that man made a conscious decision for which he is himself responsible. Then, if "will" can be taken to mean a conscious responsible choice of evil when a good was available, the point would apply. But we cannot support the separate independent existence of "a will," which then becomes the source of human behaviour.

We could not pretend to propose a complete and final counter-explanation. What does seem essential is that the existence of the total man in the process of life be understood. And, at the same time, the existence of ethical value of human behaviour be included.

To that end Barry's early discussion of evolutionary ethics is appropriate. "Faith in evolution," he wrote in 1930, "must be recognized as dominant in the whole outlook of the present age."[450] But it is *a* faith which leads to "gigantic disillusionment." Julian Huxley's evolutionary humanism, e.g., Barry wrote, rests on the assumption "that there are within the sources of civilization creative and regenerative forces adequate to respond to its own demands"[451] . . . With Huxley says Barry, "Whatever emerges must be accepted . . . whatever is, is best."[452]

But, writes Barry,

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[450] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 123

[451] Ibid., p. 125

[452] Ibid., p. 145

> It is important to realize from the start that . . . it is the minds of men which evolve; not the goodness or truth which they realize. Valuations may evolve; but values are the measure of evolution.[453]

If value, and what life is supposed to mean, is itself in the process of evolution (or in the findings of any science), it ends with no value and no meaning.

> What the world "means" cannot change or evolve. But we who come out of its evolving process may advance to a less inadequate recognition of its worth, its meaning and its purpose. . . . The race may find value tomorrow where yesterday it was unaware of it. If so, it will be we who have changed, not the meaning or value which we find.[454]

No ethic that rests on evolution can justify its own obligations. Value, and what is valuable, exist outside of the process. It is only our increasing self-conscious awareness of this value which can be said to evolve.

There Barry's point is clear and consistent with his understanding of the differences between human behaviours and the value we attach to them.

The uniqueness of man is conferred upon him. It is not an assemblage of good and superior attributes from nature which he garnered on his evolutionary rise.

> If Man is merely a product of natural processes, whether biological or evonomic, then he can claim no value in his own right, and the processes that make him can break him. . . . But if Man is a spiritual personality - in religious language, a Child of God - then the whole situation is different.[455]

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[453] Ibid., p. 153

[454] Ibid., p. 178

[455] Barry, What Has Christianity To Say? (London and New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938), p. 29; this little known book of Barry's, written in 1937, deserves a better hearing.

Christian theology has not "the least interest in drawing a veil over human origins." Man shares instincts and propensities with the other mammals, and with all of life. If we deny these facts, it is "merely silly." "We do not establish man's spirituality by attempting to dematerialize the physical."[456] On the other hand,

> Christianity reads the whole story. Man is not (as he once hoped) a god, nor as he now begins to fear an animal. He is soul, still making. The child of natural and organic process, a creature, dependent at every stage of development on powers not his own, he is claimed and called by spiritual reality to accept the responsibility of self-hood and to become a "person" in response to it.[457]

No knowledge about where man has been will ever tell us the most important things about him now - "what he is and whither he is going."

> The Christian interpretation of man's state is that it is explicable only in its relation to that spiritual environment on which it depends and by which it is transcended, and that man will never be complete or satisfied or freed from his own interior contradictions 'til his true relationship to it is achieved . . .[458]

The relationship of Grace to nature is always one where "Grace fulfills the nature of man, it does not destroy it."

> The Giver of Grace is the Author of Creation. But it is through grace, through God's work in man, that we best understand what "creation" means. Man is the key to the structure of the universe.[459]

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[456] Ibid., p. 126

[457] Ibid., p. 130

[458] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 67

[459] Ibid., pp. 53-54

It was a point that has been made clearer in Teilhard and the philosophical biology of our time. It was also made by Bishop H. H. Henson, whom Barry once called "one of the greatest Bishops of his generation."[460] Henson, in his Gifford Lectures at St. Andrews in 1935-1936, argued skillfully for a theme that is present in the title of the published lectures: Christian Morality: Natural, Developing, Final. The Bishop of Durham wrote:

> It is based on the assumption that, since man is developing from the lowest phase of human life to the highest, the truth about his nature will be most fully disclosed in the latest phase of his development.[461]

A. E. Taylor also noted it in his Gifford Lectures: "To think of the moral life adequately, we must think of it as an adventure which begins at one end with nature, and ends at the other with supernature."[462]

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There is a troubling aspect of the way in which Barry himself understands the uniqueness of man in nature, and it comes when he neglects the passage where that which was "not-man" becomes "man." He never incorporates the implications of the origin of man, whom he says is a human spirit. On the one hand he speaks as if (over)

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[460] Barry, Secular and Supernatural, p. 32

[461] H. H. Henson, Christian Morality: Natural, Developing, Final (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1936), p. 308

[462] A. E. Taylor, The Faith of a Moralist (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1937), p. 124

all that is essentially human is a special gift, conferred by virtue of the Creator. The dignity of man comes in that God loves him and has gifted him with "human attributes." On the other, Barry occasionally refers to "those capacities which we regard as specifically human - love and loyalty and constructive thought, our thirst for truth and our delight in beauty,"[463] as coming out of and along with those other primitive endowments. Barry is not clear as to how they become humanized.

The choices are either that the specifically human attributes are developed out of the natural characteristics as they appear and are modified in nature; or there is a special endowment of what is spirit or soul, from the Creator, at the time when what is pre-human becomes human. While Barry affirms the former, there is a way in which he also tries to work in the latter. For example: the problem recurs in Barry's interpretation of the evolution of man. In preserving the Christian uniqueness of man, Barry borrows the philosophy of Emergent Evolution. "Biologists are almost all agreed in principle," he writes, "that at any stage of the evolution of life there is something 'there' which was not there before."[464]

> Life emerges within the inorganic, and begins to climb the spiral; within life emerges rudimentary consciousness, which in turn gives birth to intelligence. . . . Within intelligence, at the end of the story

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[463] Barry, What Has Christianity To Say? p. 127

[464] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 154

> (though perhaps it is still more like the beginning), emerges Man as self-conscious spirit.[465]

The problem is still present. "What is man?" Is he "the self conscious spirit," as a result of a progressive development which culminates in him, or did he have the self-conscious spirit conferred upon him by the Creator? If it is, as with Teilhard de Chardin, that pre-existent in all of life from the very beginning, were the potentialities for all that would later come - in the basic stuff of the universe existed the potential for the mind of man - then the sharp distinction inwhat the human spirit is as a unique being, cannot be drawn as clearly as Barry does in other places. The distinction is then one of development.

Biologists would almost all agree that: "There is something there which was not there before" in every evolutionary development. But it is not the same kind of "something" which Barry might be referring to. That agreed newness is there as a natural development advance, an adjunct of what is becoming (whether it can be understood in detail or not). "The human spirit," as Barry uses the phrase, would not be that something "there" almost all biologists would agree . H. Graham Cannon would, as we have earlier noted,[466] make that point, as would some others. Barry's dependence on Sir Alister Hardy's Gifford

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[465] Ibid., p. 164

[466] See page 64

Lectures is an extension of that same ambiguity in Secular and Supernatural.[467] We agree with Hardy's ambition - to discuss evolution in relation to the "spirit of man"; but when Barry writes of "that something within life itself, reaching out to new adventures and experiments,"[468] he comes close to a Lamarckian dilemma. While he wrote earlier that Darwin had annihilated the earlier typology of natural development where the Will of God was transferred to the mutations and evolutionary changes, a neo-vitalism of the years after Darwin, Barry here seems to substitute an equally indefensible Will of God to direct the development and the newness in man.

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[467] Barry, Secular and Supernatural, pp. 127 ff, etc.

[468] Ibid., p. 128

5. Enquiry and Method on Moral Problems

How Barry applies his theoretical ethical foundation to the specific moral problems of our time is of enormous interest. In The Recovery of Man Barry applies his view of the nature of man in specific ethical situations. It is not simply a theoretical point of doctrine, for

> If we start by believing, as Christians, that "what it is to be man" essentially is to be a creature made in the image of God, it follows that the account which will be given of his biological origin and behaviour will not indeed tamper with the facts in order to point to an edifying moral, but it will be different from the account given by anyone who assumes that man is simply and solely a biological species.[469]

We begin with Barry's discussion of the ethical problems related to the family in modern society. In 1931 he called the rehabilitation of family life "the primary moral issue of our time."[470] It is an area which interests more than the Christian moralist. Others may study the family from the standpoint of biology or sociology or economics:

> But none of these views will be realistic unless it also includes all the others, and unless it be

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[469] Barry, The Recovery of Man, pp. 40-41

[470] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 202

> remembered that man is not merely a civilized animal nor a moralized social being, but that he is also an immortal spirit with a soul to save and a destiny to realize.[471]

The family is an area of ethical discussion "in which the natural good is fully realized only by partaking in the supernatural."[472]

The Christian moralist will not "tamper with the facts" of the situation, nor will he supply the facts from other than the scientific source. But he will give them value in a wider context. He will take account of the historical and sociological studies of the human family:

> . . . but to these general considerations Christianity adds its own sovereign principles. No thought about the family can be true which thinks merely in terms of this world. Man is made for life eternal; and all social groupings and relationships must therefore fall short of their real significance if they are not so constituted and ordered as to school men for that eternal destiny. The family, in its Christian conception is an incarnation of life eternal.[473]

Barry is unyielding at this point throughout his ethical writings. The contribution which Christian ethics can make to the ethical discussions of our time is a distinctively religious one. It joins in the efforts to unravel the complexity of information relating to man and his behaviour; but it joins that same quest at its own

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[471] Ibid., p. 204

[472] Ibid., p. 201

[473] Ibid., p. 206

level and on its own terms. It is willing to listen, but also prepared to speak.

Following Barry in this way, the Christian moralist first makes himself aware of the facts of the ethical situation. Christianity cannot attempt to escape the twentieth century, and in this instance, as always, we have to deal with the facts as they are. "How far is it possible in the changed conditions of the twentieth century for the Christian ethic to offer convincing guidance for the rebuilding of the family?"[474]

"Family life," he later wrote, "is changing rapidly, whether for better or worse" . . . "If we are to assess the changes realistically, we need theological interpretation and not merely attitudes that we have inherited":

> Unless we expect that Christian family life can remain static and as it were insulated in the midst of a rapidly changing society - and that means, in the end, to put it in a museum. We must not try to equate the Christian family with the social patterns of earlier generations.[475]

Absent in the earlier work is Barry's historical and scientific analysis of the contemporary understanding of the family group.[476] Here he notes that the historical and biological origin of the family, "is in the helplessness of the human infant." "But it is not simply a

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[474] Ibid., p. 203

[475] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 185

[476] Ibid., pp. 187 ff.

biological fact," and "Christian spokesmen need be rather careful not to claim more than is warranted by the facts." Our idea of the family pattern is a contemporary and cultural expression of the biological or "natural" fact.

> The idea that a man and a woman should be married as a matter of private arrangement between themselves, of their free choice and because they wanted to, because they were in love with one another, without reference to their tribe or kin, would have seemed immoral to early society and would probably have shocked Queen Victoria.[477]

Even more the idea that a man and wife should live together in one place, and that both should care for the offspring in a systematic and continuing way, is also a recent phenomenon. Marriage and family, as we now accept them, are the result of a long historical development. It has been closely related to the economic needs and social ideas of the particular group in question. When economic and social conditions changed, so did the concept of the family. What we would want to call the "Will of God" for the Christian family, says Barry, must be mediated through our understanding of the other factors involved. Our advice on its future pattern must begin with the awareness that it is "now once again in a changing social environment . . . Its shape and pattern are bound to be readjusted."[478]

The exact meaning which Barry intends when he writes

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[477] Ibid., p. 188

[478] Ibid., p. 190

that the "shape and pattern are bound to be readjusted" is not entirely clear. When he earlier wrote that the rehabilitation of the Christian family is the most important ethical task of the modern world, he probably meant more a rehabilitation of the idea of the family which existed in the early years of this century, although he did stress that new factors would demand new approaches. In the latter book, he seems to be writing about an actual change in the shape and pattern, and does not simply call for rehabilitation.

> Christians must be careful not to suggest that the family is an end in itself. It is part of a larger social and moral structure and only fulfills itself in that larger whole. We must not forget that our Lord Himself was "difficult" when his family circle made inordinate claims upon Him.[479]

He applies the general statement to several specific factors affecting marriage and the family such as economic and social value of women working, and the use of contraceptives. But he does not really mean that our idea of the family as the basic unit of society, and the source of Christian values, should be radically changed. He wrote: "The family seems to be in transition towards a changed pattern of relationship"; and "anything that may tend to weaken the family . . . Christians must regard as a menace to social welfare."[480]

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[479] Ibid., p. 196

[480] Ibid., p. 194

This was of course also the general conclusion and concern of the Relevance of Christianity, written almost forty years earlier. The difference is that in the latter work Barry has expanded his analysis and has enlarged the setting in which the Christian view of marriage and the family is placed. In neither case does he point to the sentimental family of The Cotter's Saturday Night, or end with a lament that things have changed. Both books are characterized by Barry's emphasis that:

> Christian ethics are always in the making. What we call contemporary social movements are in fact history unfolding; but here as always new situations bring with them not only new moral problems but also the need for critical reassessment of traditional or inherited moral judgments.[481]

"The Christian home," wrote Barry, "is not a mere synonym for a commonplace, virtuous domesticity." It is, as the Christian Church claims, "a sacrament of human relationships in their ideal - at once the symbol and instrument of redemption through the Love Divine."[482]

But to accept the ideal, or to make it workable in modern society, Barry goes on to delineate five areas in which "new data" must be given "searching and courageous attention."

(1) The circumstances of industrialized society and the disturbing economic factors involved in it. Here

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[481] Ibid., p. 185

[482] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 218

moral judgments and social standards are affected in ways beyond the control of the individual and his decision. One arises out of the consideration that biological maturity comes prior to economic capability. "Early marriage is becoming increasingly difficult and, as things are, probably undesirable."[483] The biological impulse calling for sexual expression is present prior to the time that society presently permitted marriage.

This prompts Barry to discuss seriously the suggestions for "trial" or "companionate" marriages, made back then by people such as Judge Lindsey, Lord Russell, and Mrs. Sanger. The suggestion is:

> that young people whose means do not permit of setting up home together should yet be rescued both from promiscuity and from social and psychological disaster, by being united in lawful wedlock on a "companionate" basis.[484]

It is a serious proposal, says Barry, and "should not be answered by mere abuse." "It is arguable that it might be a good thing for human welfare if the 'companionate' were given a trial . . ."

The objection, to Barry, is that it is not really a trial "marriage." "It isolates 'love' as sexual desire, from the responsibilities and sacrifices involved in the sharing of a permanent home."[485]

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[483] Ibid., p. 218. Incidentally in the latter book Barry noted that early marriage was becoming easier.

[484] Ibid., p. 219

[485] Ibid., p. 220

> It is good to satisfy sexual desire: to suggest that it is unholy is not Christian. But this goodness is but one element in the goodness realizable by man; if it is so attained as to exclude other and higher elements in goodness, then its realization is positively evil.[486]

> A man attains his full stature only so far as biological impulses are woven as one strand into the pattern of his whole psycho-physical constitution . . . Love is a self-giving of the whole man; and therefore it must involve some inhibitions upon the crude impulses of some parts of him.[487]

Such isolation results when one moves the subject of sexual desire from its proper place in the Christian conception of human nature.

> Thus the gratification of one instinct is isolated from the whole rich complex of bodily, mental, and spiritual experience within which it plays a rightful part. This is what Christianity repudiates. This is not a matter of arbitrary conventions imposed upon the young by the middle-aged. It depends upon our conception of human nature. Christianity takes account of the facts. It certainly does justice to the life of instinct.[488]

The changed economic status of women is another factor which must guide us, says Barry, in our ethical deliberation regarding family and marriage. "A man will no longer 'keep' his wife. She will not be dependent upon him either intellectually or economically. The ideal of love and indeed the whole conception of family life is bound to pass through far reaching changes."[489]

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[486] Ibid., p. 212

[487] Ibid.

[488] Ibid., pp. 211-12

[489] Ibid., p. 222

(2) The second of "the new data" is "the thought of this generation that parenthood is not the primary aim of marriage." The desire to limit family should come not only from selfishness, but from "the idea that a woman in the modern world ought not to be asked to submerge herself entirely in the duties and demands of maternity."[490] On all grounds, sociological and Christian, "the smaller family of the modern fashion is preferable to that of our predecessors." The Christian ethic must be prepared to incorporate such knowledge into its formulation of an ethic of birth control, and not just continue to insist that the Bible says "be fruitful and multiply" - a command which was intended for a day when an increase of population was mandatory for successful survival. But:

> From the Christian standpoint a human baby is of more value than a Baby Austin . . . No serious thinker, least of all the Christian, can blind himself to the grave moral symptoms involved in undue restriction of the family. But families cannot be reared on a sense of duty. It is no good saying that people ought to have them. The procreation of children is bearable only as the crown of delight and joy.[491]

(3) This brings Barry to a third consideration: that of our attitude to the question of population. "An absolute increase in population is not necessarily a Christian ideal." "There are no Christian values involved in a quantitative increase of homo sapiens."[492] Our

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[490] Ibid., p. 224

[491] Ibid., p. 223

[492] Ibid., p. 225

attitude should depend "on what population is needed to produce the best way of life under the conditions of a given area." It is a matter which belongs to the experts - "the material for a moral decision must be supplied very largely by economics."[493] Futile sentimentalism or irrelevancy results if we proceed with an ethic of population control which ignores the economic facts of existence.

> So too with biological efficiency. Christianity ought to set itself decisively against the multiplication of the unfit, and to work for a far more sensitive public in all that concerns hygiene and eugenics.[494]

Eugenics need not become a "new religion," but the Christian ethic will emphasize the responsibilities involved.

The traditionalists were meanwhile increasing the tempo of their preachment to "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." R. C. Mortimer was worried then that the population decrease due to the use of contraceptives would deplete the human population from the face of the earth.[495]

Dean Inge, meanwhile, like Barry, had caught the most important aspect of the topic. Inge had investigated from all available sources of information around him the

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[493] Ibid.

[494] Ibid., p. 226

[495] R. C. Mortimer, The Elements of Moral Theology (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1947), p. 181. It is after all, rather difficult to reconcile Mortimer's fear regarding contraceptives and the decline of population, with his earlier belief in the same book that celibacy and chastity are great Christian virtues which should be considered by all.

relevant information, and had concluded:

> One of the most ominous and discreditable symptoms of the want of candour in present-day society is the deliberate neglect of the population question.[496]

The growing birth rate and declining death rate were already showing signs that the coming problem of over-population would be critical indeed. It was a problem that Malthus and Darwin foresaw as well, and Inge makes reference to Darwin's predictions regarding it. "The optimum population of the British Isles," write Inge (although he also said that a decline in the numbers of Englishmen and Scotsmen would not be a good thing) "is probably several million less than the forty-eight million now."[497]

The main fact of the matter is that we will have to reduce our population and, if we conclude that a restriction of the numbers of births is a part of the Christian responsibility, "the question" said Barry, "becomes simply the choice of the right method for securing this."[498]

The "new data" which must be considered is the increasing use and effectiveness of contraceptives. There are problems involved here. For one, Barry warns of an accusation which is often used in the United States,

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[496] Inge, Christian Ethics, Modern Problems, p. 257

[497] Ibid., p. 271

[498] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 227

and its current racial troubles - that contraceptive information can be used to shirk the responsibilities of the society to "deal faithfully with slum properties and provide working-class dwellings." Teaching the poor to limit families can be a way of reducing the social problem.[499] There is also the problem that an increased use of contraceptive devices leads to widespread promiscuity. But, answers Barry, "such knowledge is already the common property of the young," and "the moral judgment must choose between driving it furtively behind a hedge and employing it in a frank, scientific way to enrich the values of married life."[500] For

> If we compel sincere men and women to import shame, evasion, and subterfuge into their most intimate relationships, how can we hope to Christianize home life, or to construct a Christian social order from its foundations in the home upwards?[501]

The objection that the use of contraceptives is "unnatural," says nothing to modern man. "Everything in civilized life depends on conscious control of the natural processes," and it can be "a most important step towards the deliberate direction of instinct."[502] What will be the most important interest for the Christian ethic is not that the new discovery makes it easier to be immoral,

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[499] See F. Wertman, A Sign for Cain, passim, where the accusation is directed in favor of the American negro.

[500] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 230

[501] Barry, Relevance of the Church, p. 167

[502] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 231

as was taught by Mortimer, but that:

> It is that these new facts and changed circumstances involve results still to be fully appreciated on the content of men's moral judgments and the personal conduct of good men and women.[503]

"All new discoveries bring new moral problems, insofar as they widen the area of choice."[504]

Contrast that approach with another Anglican moralist, R. C. Mortimer. Mortimer included a chapter on "Sex and Marriage" in his book, Christian Ethics. The human body, he wrote, is to be used only for the purpose for which it was created. "It seems self-evident that the human race is divided into two sexes for the purpose of propagation."[505] The right use of the sexual instinct will take place in regard only to parenthood and a life-long partnership. Even there the sex act will be mistrusted for while "Christian ethics does not condemn pleasure in sex, it mistrusts it because of its intensity."[506] "Modesty and delicacy," Mortimer says, "are an instinctive natural protection against the degradation of the self which inevitably follows from a misuse of its vehicle of expression."[507]

Also in his text-book, The Elements of Moral Theology, Mortimer discussed sexual relations and contraceptives. His natural law casuistry there declared that

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[503] Ibid., p. 231

[504] Ibid., p. 197

[505] Mortimer, Christian Ethics, (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1950), p. 106

[506] Ibid., p. 111

[507] Ibid., p. 105

"reliance on contraceptives has been a major factor in the increase of promiscuity,[508] and contraception leads to an unnatural use of the human sexuality.

> The real question on contraceptives is that it turns into a form of unnatural vice. It is unnatural because it is directly opposed to the end for which the sexual act is intended.[509]

He does acknowledge the "growing tendency to admit the quasi-sacramental nature of sex," and that today we are trying to understand sexual relations as an expression of love and a sharing of personhood. But even there, it should accompany the original purpose for which sex was created.

Our cause is not to discredit those who happen to think (wrongly we would say) that contraceptives are unnatural and immoral. Neither is it to ridicule those who think differently about ethics. It is a matter of procedure and a matter of how a moralist receives his information, however he uses it in the end. In this case Mortimer has attempted to read out of a theory of natural history, a created purpose for human sexuality. We conclude that his methodology is wrong, as well as the moral counsel he gives in the end.

Lippmann seems more to the point of the argument in the thirties, and in some isolated areas today,

> With contraception established as a more or less

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[508] Mortimer, Elements of Moral Theology, p. 178

[509] Ibid., p. 178

> legitimate idea in modern society, a vast discussion has ensued as to how the practice of it can be rationalized.[510]

We would substitute for "rationalized" something more in the order of how the practice can be understood to belong in the changing climate of Christian ethics; but the end result is the same.

(4) Barry begins his discussion of the "new data" regarding divorce with the words:

> The battle tactics of the Church Militant, as it sets itself to hold or reconquer the ideal of marriage for the Christian standards, do not suggest very brilliant generalship. It has always been prone to defend the wrong line. Thus we wasted our strength and energy in resisting the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill, which involved no vital Christian principle, and meanwhile we marry first cousins, and gaily confer the blessing of the Church on countless marriages which are really wrong and should not be permitted by any legislation. We are now in danger of making the same mistake in our attitude to the question of divorce.[511]

We "drag our ideal through the mud" when we insist that a marriage with no real meaning must be continued because the Christian conception of marriage is that it should be lifelong and indissoluble. "No healthy moral opinion can be formed in the general mind of society by holding compulsorily together two people who belong to one another in nothing except a tie imposed by the law."[512] The Church must become aware "that there are bound to be cases where a marriage proves to be morally unworkable."

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[510] Lippmann, Preface to Morals, p. 293

[511] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 233

[512] Ibid., p. 235

For Christianity, marriage is indissoluble - but only on Christian presuppositions.[513] It is only those "whom God has truly joined together" which man may not put asunder. Barry suggests that the continental system of two marriage services - one state and legally binding, one Church "and not confused with the legal contract," is worth serious consideration. In that way the Christian Church would be rescued from "the hypocrisy of blessing marriages which it ought not to recognize."

But Barry's objection to the double-marriage proposition is that the practice would endanger the central part which the church now plays, or can play, in its ministry to the young married couples. "Where the parties involved have not reached the level of fully developed Christian thinking," they would neither qualify nor apply. The possible help which the Christian Church could offer, would then be lost.

But as an alternative, the church should make its rules "more realistic and more adaptable to changing conditions." What the church really means by indissoluble is not that it is sacramental but that the "married state is capable of becoming something sacramental."

> The defense of the Church's law as it stands is, obviously, that there is no hope of any marriage becoming sacramental unless it is entered upon by the parties with a firm and honest intent of life-long fidelity and companionship.[514]

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[513] Ibid., p. 236

[514] Ibid., p. 239

(5) Women's Vocations:

> We can hope for no adequate Christian ethic 'til we have given more thorough consideration to the whole standing of women in the modern world and the poise and rhythm of feminine life.[515]

This is a concern of Bishop Barry's which follows directly out of the Women's Rights Movements which were characteristic of the time when he was writing the Relevance of Christianity. It is a clear defense of the right of women (wife and mother) to be individuals on their own.

> It is urgently necessary for the Christian ethic that we should attempt to lay open fresh avenues of useful and worthwhile service which will offer women a richer and wider scope for their contribution to community life.[516]

In the earlier writing Barry discussed the problems of sexual ethics under the chapter heading "The Family." Those specifics which he mentioned were always related to the effect which they had on marriage and family life. It is significant that in Christian Ethics and Secular Society, he enlarges the setting in which the discussion takes place. A wide range of the problems of sexual ethics is seen in the relationship of the individual to himself and to the whole society. Ethical problems regarding homosexuality, abortion or sterilization, which were not mentioned in the previous volume at all, receive careful and often lengthy consideration here. "Charity and Chastity" becomes a full chapter on its own.

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[515] Ibid., p. 242

[516] Ibid., p. 246

The structure of his ethical approach alters slightly over the years, but some emphases are different. One reflects Barry's increasing awareness of the ever-increasing volume of animal behaviour studies. Evolutionary Ethics, and in particular Julian Huxley's attempt, are rejected in favour of a more balanced view of the origin of man and his behaviour.

> We must first disavow the fallacy of origins as expressed in the popular phrase 'it is human nature to be' pugnacious, acquisitive or sensual. It is fatally easy to think that because man is a product of biological evolution, biology can determine our moral judgements.[517]

Directly to the point of our thesis, Barry acknowledges that man inherits the "pre-human instinct." "We have our roots in pre-human nature and it is at our peril that we forget it."[518] We may inherit the range of instinct:

> But in man the inherited instincts are no longer simply biological facts. He is able to reflect upon them, work upon them in thought and imagination, to bring them under rational control, to choose the objects of their satisfaction, to direct them as means to his own ends and purposes, and in all these ways they are profoundly modified.[519]

Instincts (or vitalities or drives) are "neither moral nor immoral; they are just the conditions of our existence." If we use the word "natural" in its usual sense, then "Nothing that man does is ever simply natural."

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[517] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 157

[518] Ibid., p. 153

[519] Ibid., p. 158

All of his activity must be seen in his manhood. But, especially on the subject of human sexuality, we should be aware that "instinctive drives" are "the potential stuff of character." But a Christian theology of sex "will be a theology of personality and the rightful place of biological impulses in man's psycho-physical constitution."[520]

> . . . What we ought to be thinking and talking about, if we are to be thinking as Christians or indeed as rational beings at all, is not about something called sex, but about people, moral personalities, about the Christian understanding and interpretation of human life and the place of biological instincts in it. And it is only within that frame of reference that we can be talking in Christian or ethical terms.[521]

The isolation of the subject of sex, even if it be by well meaning educators who teach the "facts of life honestly and openly to the young people in our society, can be positively harmful."

> For a Christian child the first and most important thing is to learn that though he is cousin to the apes - which he knows in experience pretty well already - what he is essentially is a child of God and heir of everlasting life . . .[522]

It is precisely because man is man that we cannot view his biological impulses other than in their potentially moral situation.

> If a man "sins in his sex," or becomes a glutton or a drunkard, that is not because sex or hunger or thirst are sinful but because he is sinful and perverts them. Human beings alone, because they are

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[520] Ibid., p. 159

[521] Ibid., p. 157

[522] Ibid., p. 159

human beings, are capable of "inordinate desire."[523] The most important fact for young children to know is "what is meant by moral personality." We do not teach children not to be greedy by showing them pictures of the digestive organs." Rather we supply them with the moral principles "in the light of which they can learn to control and harmonize their still uncoordinated impulses and to grow up, to become mature and adult."

The question of pre-marital intercourse, writes Barry, "is the most live question in this field today."[524] Our thinking must be realistic. And although Christianity "quite clearly cannot approve of it," we should see it in the context of its social setting and biological impulse: in a society which "offers them little help and certainly sets no standard they can respect."

Barry's argument against pre-marital intercourse is one which avoids the actual question for he transfers our attention to the Christian concept of sex and marriage. Its "end" and its fulfillment is the "one-flesh" union, "that is to say the union of two persons totally committed to one another, living and sharing the whole of life together."[525] If that be so, concludes Barry, sexual experience outside of marriage is wrong.

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[523] Ibid., p. 163

[524] Ibid., p. 175

[525] Ibid., p. 176

But later, discussing contraceptive information and its availability to the unmarried, he asks:

> Should it be denied to unmarried young people? The instinctive Christian reaction to that is "Of course" . . . But is this quite certainly the right answer?
>
> It is arguable that this is one of the points at which Christian citizens in a sinful world have no choice but to opt for the lesser of two evils. In any case you cannot compel people to avoid fornication by withholding information from them.[526]

Homosexuality "is another case where new knowledge requires a new approach to the whole problem, and a reexamination of certain inherited Christian moral judgements."[527] "Sex may be always to some extent ambivalent, as it certainly seems to be in some of the animals." There are infinite variations and degrees of interpretation, and "far too little is known even now."

Barry draws a clear distinction between "the homosexual" and "the homosexual act"; the former a clinical problem, the later a moral one. The homosexual is a "deprived person, cut off from a full share in the common life," handicapped, as are the blind, and not subject to a moral judgment. The act of homosexuality, in all of its various forms, is "something morally evil, which no Christian is likely, or ought, to minimize."[528]

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[526] Ibid., p. 203

[527] Ibid., p. 178

[528] Ibid., p. 180

The intent of the distinction is in itself commendable. Barry is using it to plead for an acceptance of the homosexual as a person. But in the process, his argument becomes confusing. On the one hand, he acknowledges that some homosexuality is constitutional, for although some perverts choose homosexuality, there are others who cannot help it; they are made that way.

> At the end of the scale, however, there are notoriously a considerable number of both men and women who are constitutionally incapable of any attraction towards the opposite sex and whose whole sexual development is fixated and inverted within their own.[529]

> That is his handicap, his deprivation and, as with any other disability, he has to learn to accept it and live with it and make the best that he can of life in spite of it.[530]

Barry does not go into great detail as to why a person may be "constitutionally" homosexual; but we can assume from his association of the ambivalence of sex in the same paragraph (and from Barry's other use of biological information), that he means that it is part of the natural endowment, over which the individual has no rational control.[531]

On the other hand, he insists that homosexual acts, or the expression of a natural endowment, are "greviously sinful in the sight of God - If we love righteousness, we must hate iniquity."

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[529] Ibid., pp. 178-79

[530] Ibid., p. 179

[531] Although he later writes (p. 184): "at the moment there appears to be no agreement whether this condition has any physiological or biological or genetic basis." It could be (in Barry's thought) a purely environmental condition.

One gets the impression that Barry is arguing that while it may be natural and acceptable to be a homosexual in thought and desire, it is unacceptable and "unnatural" to act as one. Our objection is not so much a defense of the right of the homosexual to practice homosexuality, as it is an objection that Barry seems to be inconsistent in his use of what is (or may be) natural.

If homosexuality is "constitutional," it seems dangerous for a Christian moralist to conclude, as Barry does:

> Provided that both sexes are included, Christians will of course judge that perversion, deflecting the laws of creation from their course and submitting human beings to degradation, is greviously sinful in the sight of God.[532]

The source of the inconsistency and the subsequent confusion, as was also true with Dr. Barth, lies in the concept of creation regarding man and woman, which arises not from biological study but from Biblical vocabulary alone:

> Man and woman are correlative terms. Man and woman are made for one another, they need one another, reach out for one another. . . . Human life needs for its fulfillment this mutuality between man and woman, complementary to one another, and each supplying what the other lacks: neither man nor woman alone is self sufficient.[533]

Whatever the conclusion on homosexuality - whether it be the moral rejection here, or the moral acceptance elsewhere, when one begins with so clear and final a description of the man-woman relation in nature, one's viewpoint of

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[532] Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 183

[533] Ibid., p. 167

of homosexuality is necessarily limited. Neither Barry nor Barth is prepared to discuss the possibility that homosexuality may be an expression of a biological and genetic requirement. Barry is certainly closer to the open investigation that seems warranted by the facts of scientific discovery. But he is not freed from the beginning assumption that homosexuality must in the end be a grevious sin.[534]

There are other aspects in the development of Barry's ethical writings on these matters.[535] But with a few minor exceptions, he has approached the problems from the scientific information available, and has applied it to his workable Christian ethic. Suicide, euthanasia, abortion, and sterilization are discussed under "The Sanctity of Life."[536] Each belongs to a contemporary understanding of what is meant by the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." Barry suggests that in each of these areas, there is a necessary exception to the traditional condemnations. Suicide "must be seen in its wider social reference," and "the Christian judgement will surely be very merciful." Uncompromising laws on euthanasia are unfair to the doctor

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[534] See W. N. Pittenger: Christian View of Sexual Behaviour (Greenwich: Seabury Press, 1954)

[535] For example p. 197, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, when he writes that contraceptives "within marriage can be used for selfish ends . . . to avoid having a family at all . . . and that, as defeating the primary end of marriage, is unnatural and a sin against God." While formerly, he explained that the reproductive process was not the primary end of marriage.

[536] Ibid., pp. 246 ff.

who must make the decision day by day. We should exercise care in reforming the laws on abortion "lest public opinion should come to regard the practice of abortion, as pre-Christian society regarded it, as just a simple and obvious way out."[537] But abortion in some instances is morally necessary. Compulsory sterilization is "an infringement of human rights . . . which a Christian ethic is bound to condemn and resist"; but therapeutic or eugenic abortions can be justified.

The two "governing principles" close this section of Barry's writing, and also apply to the whole of his ethical approach:

> First, that the new discoveries of the sciences, insofar as they tend to liberate human life from the sheer determinism of nature, may serve to enhance the sanctity of life in the Will of God, and so call for Christian welcome. But secondly, that obedience to the Will of God means bringing science under moral control. Because science knows how to do things, it does not follow that it is right to do them.[538]

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[537] Ibid., p. 261

[538] Ibid., p. 263

6. Conclusion

We say then, in conclusion of this section, that F. R. Barry combines the best of both worlds, in his ethical approach as well as in his moral solutions. Barry can serve the church as a good model in the way the Christian moralist should do his work in the last part of the twentieth century. One must always keep the tension between man, as he appears in nature, in his biological origin, in his sociological setting, in his psychological development, and in his theological significance. The authentic genius of the Christian faith is that while being otherworldly and relentlessly religious,

> Yet it reveals itself from the first not only as a redemptive antiseptic, the salt that saves the world from decay, but as a vital and transforming force within the movements of this-world history.[539]

The relationship with the world about him Barry teaches, is one that is genuinely apologetic. Exhortations about how bad the world is have no place in the creative work of Christian ethics. The day has come when new sides have formed: all who honour the dignity of man and who seek for him a better, larger place, are aligned together in the search for solutions. Anyway, it is not man but

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[539] Barry, Relevance of Christianity, p. 66

God who "pronounces the last judgment. The Church is not here to condemn the world, but to save the world, and it will not be saved by censorious attitudes."[540]

Barry is useful to our research because he puts the whole idea into practice. He is conversant with the scientific materials regarding the nature of man, and he applies it to the essential contribution which is made by the Christian faith. He is flexible and willing to follow wherever truth leads. His ethical counsel is in the end rather simple in general: "Test all things, but hold fast to what is good." In the specific, it is rigorous and demanding in searching out the facts in each situation, then to apply them with the principles of Christianity.

Throughout his ethics Barry is concerned for the church and its relationship to and in the world. That is the purpose of the church, to redeem the world. What we mean by the church is that "It is to be the Body of Christ in the world. That is to say, it is to be the society through which God is revealed in the social order."[541] It is to live the faith in each generation.

The expression of the Christian ethic is rooted in an ultimate change. The principles which underlie it are not. Barry teaches that moral decisions are "experimental."

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[540] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 24

[541] Barry, "Christianity and Crisis," p. 588

They have to be made in particular situations with the materials of the situation at hand.[542] They are informed constantly by the constancy of the principles; but there is a newness about each new decision. Twenty-five years ago he wrote:

> If the "new" morality is un-Christian - and some of its experiments and suggestions do cut across Christian principle - that is not merely because it is new. Christianity is in itself a new morality. It was thus that it first appeared in the world, transvaluing the accepted values, undermining many established traditions.[543]

Every generation thinks of itself as being the starting point for all good theology and ethics: "Things that we were trying to say thirty years ago have been discovered by the younger men and are being proclaimed as new revelations. But the life and thought of the Church are in fact continuous and each generation offers its little gift."[544] Barry's "little gift" has been an enormous contribution indeed to the development and understanding of Christian morality and responsibility in this century.

Finally, Barry is optimistic, in a way that many others are not. Through all the years of this century, with wars, and economic collapse, with all the upheaval and re-evaluation of the fall of the British Empire, with

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[542] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 97

[543] Barry, Relevance of the Church, p. 158

[544] Barry, Mervyn Haigh (London: SPCK, 1964), p. 10

all of the moral and social revolution, Barry writes his optimistic plea, "before the night cometh when no man can work." Earlier he said:

> Nearly all our cherished hopes have failed us, and everything in the world today conspires to drive us back on a disillusioned skepticism. One after another good men are succumbing to it, and sadly resign themselves to the admission that in the world of 1937 Christian idealism is a proved failure.[545]

But it has not failed, not really. A study of the natural world and the biological origin of man does not lead back to the dust from which he came. It leads ahead to the end of history, and to its ultimate destination. "Man is neither an animal nor a god. He is a spirit yet an embodied spirit. He is part of nature yet he is not confined by it."[546]

> If our hopes and ideals are but wish-fulfillments in a world that is built upon some alien pattern, nothing but disillusionment awaits us. If the religion of Jesus Christ is true, the forces of hope, renewal and good will are stronger than those of reaction and decay.[547]

With Charles Darwin, "There is a grandeur in this view of life."

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[545] Barry, What Has Christianity To Say? p. 43

[546] Barry, Christian Ethics, Secular Society, p. 67

[547] Barry, What Has Christianity To Say?, p. 62

CONCLUSION

The strength of our conclusion is contained within the pages of this thesis. Throughout, we have returned to the salient point and purpose of the writing. It remains only to recapitulate the major emphases and to express a continuing concern about the future of our research. In that regard we can look briefly into two specific questions regarding the ground we have covered in the thesis and a look forward to where the research leads next.

To the first: Unfortunately,we have been forced to limit our presentation of the relevant material by the demands of space and the concern for a manageable thesis argument. Concomitant with this study are several questions which are obviously not answered in this writing. The caution of Sir Bryan Matthews, as he introduced J. S. Habgood's Religion and Science, seems appropriate:

> Neither the scientist nor church man of today can follow his dogmatic forbears to claim that any present form of scientific interpretation is final or absolute; nor that all can be revealed to man in religion.
>
> We can travel hopefully; it does not seem to be our earthly destiny to arrive.[1]

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[1] Habgood, Religion and Science, p. viii

We have "traveled hopefully" in the writing of this thesis, to the conclusion that an accurate understanding of evolutionary man is essential to the groundwork of Christian ethics in our day. Without it we fail our central task, and our ethical reflection and moral guidance becomes irrelevant to the needs of modern man.

The point is not that man is essentially good, neither that he is essentially evil, but that as he develops he is essentially responsible to make the best use of both. Man is essentially human, and in that humanity he lives by the grace of God in Jesus Christ, but he also lives in that human condition which is largely influenced by factors over which he has no conscious control. A concluding re-emphasis of that point performs some essential tasks for the Christian moralist. It reminds him of the fact of man's existence and helps to correct an improper rendering of man and his ethical possibilities. It forces him to withhold his conclusions on moral topics until he has included the relevant studies of the nature of the natural man. It leads him directly to the proper work of apologetics and the inter-communication with other disciplines which are also engaged, rightly, in the study of man. It opens a wide range of possibility to give depth and relevance to his ethical reflection. It teaches him an ultimate humility in his ethical conclusions and enhances the

possibility that his ethical advice will be helpful in the solution of many ethical problems of our time.

In the thesis we have made these general comments more specific. The material in "The Life Sciences and Ethics" speaks for itself. There we surveyed some examples of the kind of research and reflection from the life sciences which fortify the above conclusions. In "Christian Ethics and The Life Sciences," with Tennant, Barth and Barry, we investigated how applicable should be the concerns of the scientists. Tennant led our understanding of a committed Christian who was openly guided by these kinds of concerns. Barth was useful in maintaining a positively Christian commitment and also, at times, arrived at useful conclusions. Barry was the practical Christian moralist who applied the information to the plethora of moral problems which are involved. All three are useful to our thesis.

The question remains of where we go from here. Those who are familiar with the subject matter of this thesis will notice that we did not include many of the obvious ethical-moral situations which are directly related to the topic. Arising out of our concern are related discussions involving such immediate problems, e. g., as the possibilities of genetic engineering; the whole topic of eugenics and micro-surgery on the genes; artificial manipulation of personality, mood and mind

control by chemical and/or surgical means; artificial creation of life; as well as the purposeful direction of the continuing evolutionary process. These are real problems with which Christian morality is only beginning to deal. One immediate answer to our questions is that the present reserach must continue to follow in these directions as well, applying the same balanced understanding of man and his creation as we have attempted here.

Beyond that kind of specific problem there is need to enlarge the present investigation, and develop further the ethical implications of how the Christian doctrine of man is affected by such a study. Our principal interest has been in ethics itself. But the theological problem of man and his sin, the fall and Christian atonement, which were discussed but briefly in the chapter on Tennant, are still opened to a new reflection, and the possible results are far reaching and critical.

Still further, there is need now to incorporate the results of this investigation into the larger concern of how man's ethical and moral activity is preconditioned not only by the biological situation but in the psychological, anthropological, and sociological settings as well. This thesis is a partial report on how moral decisions are and can be made. It is an initial effort in handling the cooperative ethical enterprize

with all of the science that attempts to understand man and his morality - our attempt to become a knowledgeable amateur in a related field.

> Christianity has always known that man is a creature . . . It ascribes to man neither metaphysical nor moral glories, and it sees the essence of man neither in what he is, nor in what he has been, but in the wholly surprising and unmerited attitude of God towards him, and in what he may therefore hope to become. . . . It is my belief that this Christian doctrine of man can serve at the same time the presupposition and intellectual basis of both the naturalistic anthropology of our social sciences and the humanism of our civilization.[2]

This approach to the study of ethics can serve not only the Christian faith, the naturalistic anthropology, and the humanism of our civilization, but can also serve to assist us in some immediate conclusions to the ethical dilemmas of modern civilization. To that end we offer both this thesis and the continuing concern for its topic.

> The proper study of mankind should therefore not be only man himself, as Alexander Pope would have put it, but should be the universe - its contents, its mechanics, the atoms in time and space, and the molecules in organisms; it should be the electrochemical operators that we call nerves, brain, and mind, and the socializing impulse that puts simple atoms into molecular complexes, that puts bees and ants into colonies, and men into civilizations. These paths to understanding should all be followed for the proper study of mankind.[3]

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[2] Casserly, Morals and Man in the Social Sciences, p. 17

[3] Harlow Shapley, Science Ponders Religion (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960), p. v.

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